



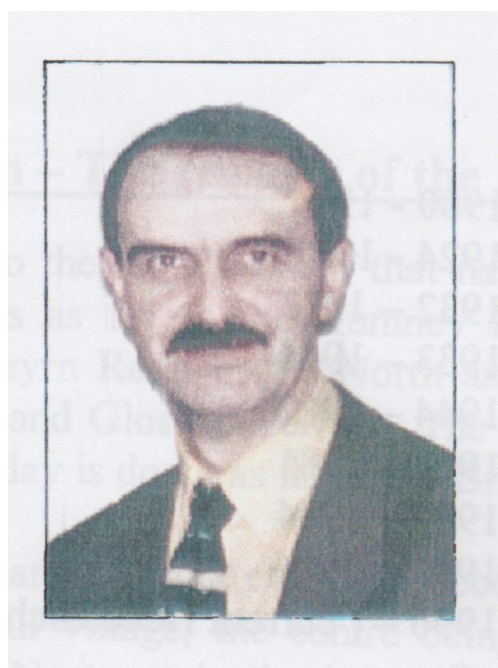
**1900 - 2000**  
**Marlborough Junior School**  
**Centenary**



**Centenary Booklet**

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### **A message from the Junior Headteacher.**

I would like to say what a privilege it is to be Headteacher of Marlborough Junior School in this our centenary year.

The school has served many generations of children in the Roath area of Cardiff. Marlborough has a proud history and owes a great deal to former teacher colleagues and children who have been the essence of our local community.

Within this booklet we have attempted to create a flavour of the history attached to the schools as well as reporting some of its current interesting features. I hope that anyone connected with the school will feel able to join us in some of the activities planned during the Centenary Week.

My hope is that in years to come future generations will look back upon our era with the same affection, and that the next hundred years will be as eventful and successful for Marlborough Schools.

John. D. Evans.

Headteacher January 2000

## **Marlborough Schools Headteachers**

### **Infants**

Alice Bale	1900 - 1924
J. Addie	1924 - 1932
E. M. Webb	1932 - 1933
Bertha Morgan	1933 - 1944
E. Holland	1944 - 1962
Miss S. Evans	1962 - 1981
Mrs Kenworthy Neale	1981 - 1984
Mrs M. Richards	1984 - 1996
Mrs D. Dickinson	1996 - ( current Headteacher)

Due to the fact that some documentation was lost during the war, we are unable to compile a complete list of Headteachers for the Girls' School or the Boys' School.

### **Girls School**

Mrs E. Richards	1900- 1917
ManhaG. Roberts	1917-1931
Eveline Phillips	1931 - 1936
Mary Jenkins	1936 - 1941

### **Boys School**

Mr J.W. Hall	1900-
Mr Francis	Dates unknown
Mr Theophilus	1931 - 1943
Mr W. Wainwright	1951 - 1957
Mr Idwal Evans	1957 - 1967
Mrs Kathleen Jones	1967 - 1981
Mr D. Griffiths	1981 - 1987
Mr J. D. Evans	1987 -( current headteacher)

## **Roath - The History of the Area.**

The word Roath refers to the old parish of that name. The boundary of the district in 1999 stretches as far as the Rumney River in the East, from Fairoak Road to Llanedeyrn Road in the North and in the West as far as Crwys Road, City Road and Glossop Terrace. The most Southerly point of the area as it is known today is down as far as the Bristol Channel.

Roath has a long history and the first evidential records of its existence was when it started as a small village, the centre being that of St Margaret's Church, founded by the Normans in the late 11<sup>th</sup> century. The population was probably static for many hundreds of years and the area shown on this Tithe map of 1840 shows it as a predominantly agricultural and rural area. The only recognisable features are Castle Road (now City Road), Crwys Road and Merthyr Road (now Albany Road). Most of the area was made up of isolated cottages and enclosed farmland.



**1840 Tithe Map of Roath**

Farms have always been important in the area. Roath was until the 1850's a very agricultural area. The principal farms were that of Splott, Pengam, Adamsdown, Llwyn y Grant, Deans Farm, Tygwyn and Penylan. Deri Farm which was on the site of the now Deri Road was demolished in 1909. Another large farm in the area had extremely wealthy owners. Penylan Farm was part of the Bute Estate and covered 115 acres and was also known as Tygwyn. Deans Farm was in the ownership of Anthony Dean from 1788 to at least 1820. Splott Farm was split into two. Upper Splott Farm had a significant family dwelling house which is now the Great Eastern Hotel, Sun Street. and Lower Splott Farm is now St Saviour's Vicarage.

This rural picture continued until the expansion of the area began dramatically during the mid Victorian era due to the industrialisation of Cardiff. With the growth of Cardiff as a major seaport, exporting coal and serving the whole of the World, there was a considerable increase in the population as well. The vast majority of the people who moved into the area were artisans who wished to move from the poorer and older areas of Cardiff. The building of houses in Roath began in earnest at this time and this can be seen clearly by census information which began around this period. No longer could Roath be regarded as a rural area.

- 1851 - Census population 312
- 1861 - Census population 3,044
- 1871 - Census population 7,781
- 1881 - Census population 23,096
- 1891 - Census population 61,074

From 1884 to 1900 as many as 3000 houses were constructed in Roath. Several great houses existed in the area and evidence of these is well documented. Roath Court (now Summers Funeral Home) was the Manor House of Dogfield and its boundary went as far as the Claude Hotel. It was owned by the Williams family until sold to Summers in 1953. Timber Square was named after Miss Timber a longstanding housekeeper of the Roath Court Estate.

Another large house was Plasnewydd Mansion or as it is known today the Mackintosh Institute. It has also been called Roath Lodge and Roath Castle. In 1890 Mr & Mrs Mackintosh donated this building, along with two acres of land to the residents of the new Mackintosh Estate for recreational use.

Tymawr (Great House) was also a significant building in the area. It is now Tymawr Old People's Centre and its origins can be dated from the late 16<sup>th</sup> or 17<sup>th</sup> century. Records show that it was occupied by the Stradling family of St Donat's and later it became part of the Tredegar Park Estate. It was closed in 1967.

In Penylan a number of houses of great importance existed and these included Wellclose and Oldwell to name but two. Wellclose was built in 1886, and its first resident was the wool merchant Thomas W Jotham. In 1947 it became an old people's home until it was closed in 1987 and then was demolished. Oldwell was built a year later than Wellclose in 1887, and for many years was the home of a wealthy Cardiff potato merchant William Young. In the early 1960's it became an old people's home and continued in this role until it closed in 1987. It was also later demolished.



### **Street Developments**

The Whole community started to expand in population during the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. Street houses sprang up throughout Roath in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century and early 20<sup>th</sup> century. This resulted in a greater demand for amenities such as schools and shops to cater for the growing population. Some of the earliest developments took place around the time of the opening of Marlborough School. It has been possible to trace the inception of some streets and the information below is based on the first house plans drawn up.

- Penylan Road 1865
- Church Terrace 1889/1895
- Alma Road 1898
- Balaclava Road 1898
- Cressy Road 1901
- Kimberley Road 1904
- Ladysmith Road 1904
- Mafeking Road 1905
- Amesbury Road 1907
- Deri Road 1907
- Westville Road 1907
- Blenheim Road 1909

The houses in what is known as Penylan were developed at a later date.

- Trafalgar Road 1911
- Colchester Avenue 1912
- Melrose Avenue 1931
- Earls Court Road 1932
- Southminster Road 1932
- Barons Court Road 1937

### **Schools in Roath Area**

As the population in the Roath area grew rapidly with the influx of people seeking and gaining employment, a greater demand was placed on the need for school provision. Towards the end of the nineteenth century a number of schools had been established in the Roath area.

- Roath Village Closed 1899/1900
- Albany Road Board Opened 1887
- Roath Park Board Opened 1895

It was not until 1900 that Marlborough Road School was opened.

Marlborough Road Board School / CBS23  
Image is part of Cardiff County Library's Media Collection  
Mae Delwedd yn ran o Gasgliad Cyfryngau Llyfrgelloedd Sir Caerdydd



Photograph of Boys and Girls Department Marlborough Road School 1902 (Photo credit: Cardiff Libraries)

**Information supplied by:-**

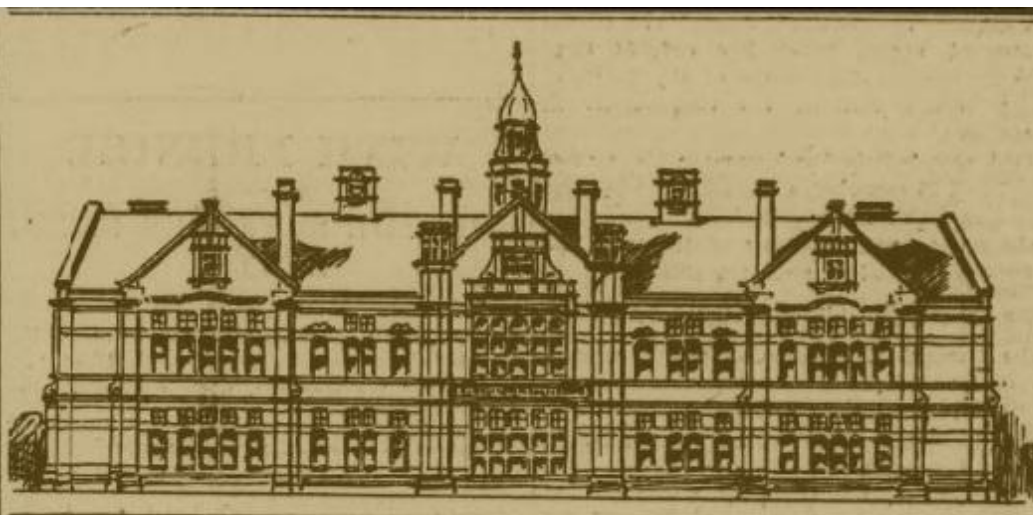
Martin Sheldon - Branch Librarian - Penylan Library.

**Acknowledgements to:-**

Mr Jeff Childs (Chair of Roath Local History Society)

The late Alec Keir (Roath Local History Society) - who both provided sources of information.





MODEL BOARD SCHOOL AT CARDIFF.

## CARDIFF'S MODEL SCHOOL. OPENING OF THE MARLBOROUGH- ROAD BUILDING.

On Thursday afternoon Dr. W. T. Edwards performed the interesting ceremony of opening the new board school at Marlborough-road, Routh, Cardiff. This latest addition to the buildings of the Cardiff School Board forms a magnificent block, erected on the most modern principles of school architecture. At three o'clock, the hour of opening, a large number of people had assembled outside the schools, among them being Mr. Lewis Williams (chairman of the board), Dr. Treharne (vice-chairman), Dr. Pritchard, the Rev. F. J. Beck, the Rev. J. Morgan Jones, Mr. Tom Taylor, Mr. H. M. Thompson, Alderman Sanders, the Rev. W. E. Shaw, Mr. J. J. Jackson (clerk to the school board), and the Rev. J. E. Dawson, together with the architects and contractor. Dr. Edwards first proceeded to open the building with a golden key presented to him, and a tour of inspection of the building having been made,

Mr. Lewis Williams, who presided over the proceedings in the central hall, said that this was the seventeenth new school opened by the Cardiff School Board, and the first boy whose name had been entered on the list of this school was a refugee from the Transvaal.

Dr. Edwards then addressed the gathering, and expressed the pride he felt, as one who had taken a deep interest in the furtherance of educational facilities in Cardiff, in being asked to open that fine new school. In saying that Cardiff was second to no town in the kingdom in the provision it had made for the education of the children, he was merely repeating what had been said by Mr. Mundella, M.P., and Sir John Gorst on the occasion of their visits to Cardiff.

Further addresses were delivered by the Rev. F. J. Beck, Mr. H. M. Thompson, Dr. Treharne,

the Rev. J. Morgan Jones, Mr. Alfred Thomas, M.P., and Alderman Sanders.

### DESCRIPTION OF THE BUILDINGS.

The school, which has been in course of construction for the last eighteen months, and affords accommodation for 1,350 pupils, is unquestionably the finest the board have yet built, as it is also the most complete. The excellence of the arrangements may best be gauged from the fact that the Commissioners who were recently sent down by the Education Department, amongst whom were such men as Sir Philip Magnus, of the City Guilds, selected the drawings as those of a model school to be forwarded to the Paris Exhibition. The school is built on the new system of central halls and class-rooms leading out on all sides. It also has cookery kitchens and a laundry, considerable pressure having been put upon the board to teach laundry work. A trained teacher of laundry work has been temporarily appointed. In addition, a school for manual instruction has also been added. This is a comparatively new, but yet a very interesting departure, which the board have been encouraged to take up by the success which has attended manual instruction at the Higher Grade School. The object of manual instruction is not to make boys carpenters, but to train them in habits of accurate observation, careful measurement, and exact workmanship. Certificated teachers have also been engaged to teach a combination of English woodwork and Sloyd, the most perfect educational system known. The architects are Messrs. Habershon, Pawckner, and Groves, of 14, Pearl-street, Cardiff, and 41, High-street, Newport. The contractor is Mr. David Davies, of Trade-street, Cardiff, the amount of his contract being £19,666.

## **Construction of Marlborough Road schools.**

With the great population expansion in the Roath area at the end of the nineteenth century, there came with it the demand for increased school provision. The Cardiff School Board had been formed in 1875 and had been busy building new schools where they were required. Indeed there were already existing schools in the area, i.e. Albany Road Board School opened in 1887 and Roath Park Board School opened in 1895, but the demand for places was so great that it was decided to look further afield for another site.

The first mention of the new school was made in the minutes of the Sites and Buildings Committee of the School Board on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of May 1896. The committee recommended that steps be taken, subject to the approval of the Education Department to purchase a site "on the south side of the Roath Brook and nearly midway between St Margaret's Church and Roath Park". Within a matter of days a senior employee of the Board, a certain Mr Twacker, visited the site and gave his approval. This approval was ratified by the Sites and Buildings Committee on June the 9<sup>th</sup> 1896 when it was decided to try and purchase the land.

The area of land selected as the site for the new school was 9,258 square yards and was on the site of the Tredegar Estate. Lord Tredegar, in the form of Sir Godfrey Charles Morgan, owned 39% of the Land and was the largest landowner in the Roath Parish. The School Board approached Lord Tredegar's agent, a Mr H J Davies for a price and such was their eagerness to acquire the land that on the 18<sup>th</sup> of December 1896, even before a quote for the cost of the land was received, they employed the services of Messrs Habershon, Fawckner and Groves to prepare plans for the new school to be erected.

Even at the end of the nineteenth century the process of purchasing and acquiring land was a protracted affair and the School Board found itself disagreeing with Lord Tredegar's agent. The initial area of land was deemed to be 9,258 square yards and a price of £2,893 was agreed but when the Board's surveyors examined the area, it was found to be only 9,137 square yards. This discrepancy was brought to the attention of the agent who subsequently agreed to reduce the cost of the land accordingly. The land for the new school had been acquired and very soon construction would begin.

The School Board gave instructions to Messrs Habershon, Fawckner and Groves to proceed with their plans and also recommended that the school had provision for 1,350 pupils. The school would consist of a Boys', Girls' and Infant department, with the final provision of numbers for each department left to the discretion of the Chairman of the Board to arrange. At the committee meeting on the 18<sup>th</sup> of January 1897, it was recommended that the school be known as Marlborough Road Board School.

After the purchase of the land, events now moved on quickly. The tender for the construction of the new school was put out to offer and the committee recommended that the services of Messrs David and Evans be utilised for the conveyancing. The principle was also approved by committee of a central hall in each of the departments to be constructed. This construction would be subject to

cost. It was further agreed that a cookery kitchen and laundry room be planned in the girls' department to prepare them for adulthood.

At the committee meeting for the Sites and Buildings of the School Board on the 3rd of March 1898, the various tenders received for the construction of the school were discussed. There were nine of these in total:-

	£.	s.	d.
C C Dunn.	22,495	0	0
W Thomas and Co.	24,497	15	0
C R Evans and Bros.	25,726	18	0
S Shepton and Sons.	24,150	15	0
B Turner and Sons.	22,688	0	0
W H Ingleson.	24,958	0	0
Lattey and Co.	21,387	0	0
W J Morgan.	25,860	0	0
David Davies.	21,490	0	0

After much deliberation, it was decided to proceed with the tender of Messrs Lattey and Co, and as the minutes stated, this would be "subject to the approval of the School Board and the builders agreeing to sureties of £1,000". However, the committee then took a decision in 1898 which we are still living with the consequences of today. In order to cut costs they decided not to fill the playground up to the proper level. This reduced the cost of construction of the school by £1,720 . 4s. As a result of this cost cutting exercise, the playground slope is still with us today, and on wet rainy days, the playground is more akin to a swimming pool than an area for children to expend energy.

A Clerk of Works, Mr John Gardner was appointed on 21<sup>st</sup> of April 1898 at a salary of £2 10s a week and just before construction began, the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the School Board visited the site on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of September to inspect and select the type of brick to be used in the construction of the school. After all these details had been resolved, the building of the school began in earnest.

As the months progressed, building work moved swiftly on. Reports were made to the School Board and the minutes of these meetings make for some interesting reading. The Board agreed to meet the extra cost "for fitting the Boys', Girls' and Infant departments with incandescent fittings". This amounted to £113, but the board in typical frugal manner, only agreed to sanction this providing a careful record was kept of gas consumed for comparisons with other schools. Also the Board agreed to fit all the departments out with blinds for £34 which seems a paltry sum by modern standards but must have equated to a considerable expenditure at the turn of the last century.

By January 1900, the school was ready for its compliment of new pupils to come streaming through its doors. Head teachers had been appointed for all the departments and all teaching staff had been selected. However the repercussions of constructing the school still abounded as the contractors were called in to face the Board and explain why they had gone over budget in the building of the school by the princely sum of £574 .12s. 6d. No mention is made in the minutes of what response was given by the constructors but it seems that the matter was resolved and so Marlborough School started its role of educating the children in the Roath area of Cardiff.

**Information researched by:-**

Robert Cooke

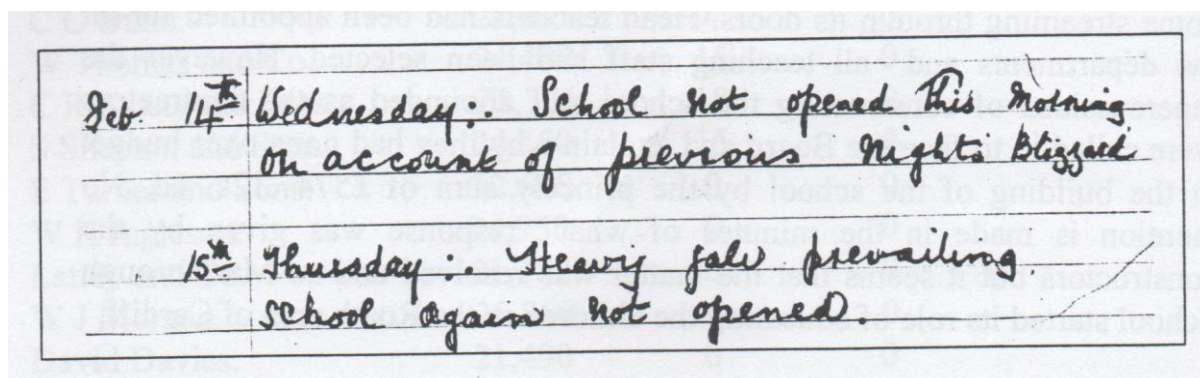
Deputy Headteacher at Marlborough Junior School - 1999.

## Extracts from the school Log Books of the Girls' and Infant' departments 1900 - 1945.

In the one hundred years since Marlborough Road School opened its doors to pupils, great events, both nationally and locally have had an influence on the pupils and people living in the vicinity of the school. These events affected the lives of parents, teachers and pupils and we have an accurate picture of what happened due to the unique records kept by the various headteachers of Marlborough Road's Schools in the form of Log Books during the twentieth Century.

It was unfortunate that the school was severely damaged during the Second World War and a considerable amount of first hand evidence in the form of the Boys' School Log Books was destroyed. However, from the remaining complete set of Infant Log Books and few remaining Girls' Log Books, it is possible to piece together an accurate picture of school life and social history of the area during the century.

One of the earliest indications of what life was like in the early years of the school was how often it had to close its doors to pupils due to severe weather conditions. As early as the 14th of February 1900, a mere month after its opening, the school doors were shut due to a severe snow blizzard.

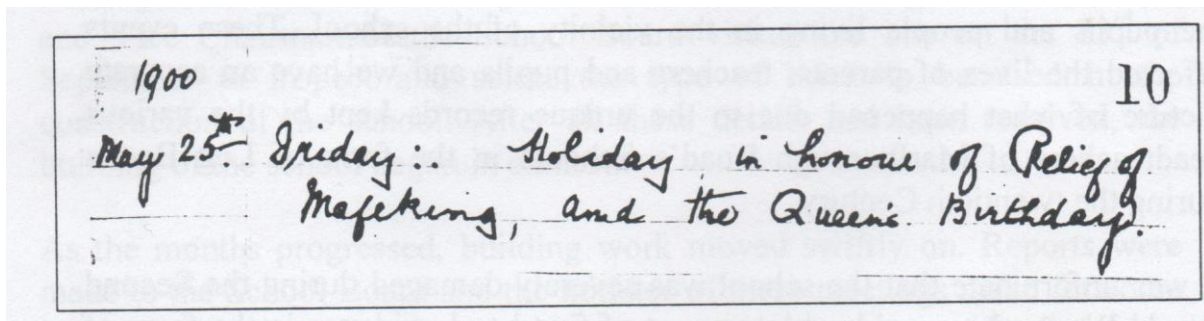


### Note of severe weather in the Log Books were commonplace

The following day the school was again closed, not because of snow but this time due to heavy gales that were prevailing. Indeed, the early years of the school seem to have been greatly enjoyed by the pupils due to the fact that they were frequently awarded holidays and days of leave due to poor weather and important historical events.

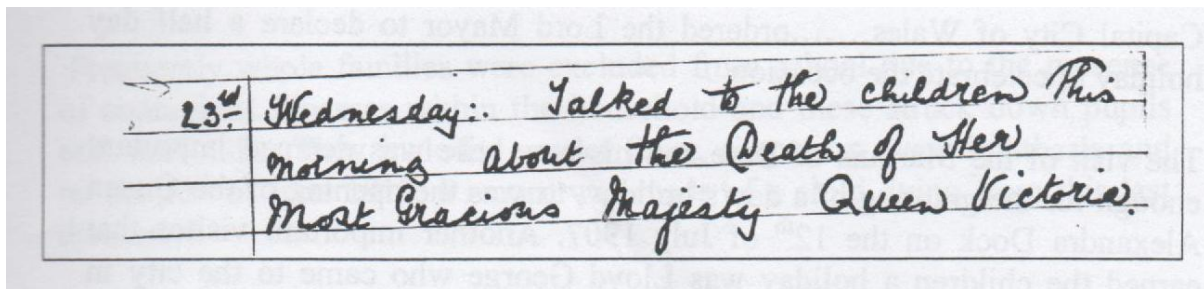
An early holiday was awarded on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of March 1900 when the children celebrated the Relief of Ladysmith, an event from the Boer War in South Africa. This was followed shortly afterwards by another holiday for the Relief of Mafeking, again set during the Boer War and also for the birthday of Queen Victoria on the 25<sup>th</sup> of May 1900.





#### An important event from the South African War celebrated with a holiday

Indeed the queen was a very popular monarch and a holiday was awarded on the 20<sup>th</sup> of June 1900 to celebrate her ascension to the throne almost 63 years previously. However, this joy was not apparent less than a year later when Mrs Bale the headteacher of the Infants recorded the death of the longest serving English monarch, on the 23rd of January 1901.



#### The death of Queen Victoria

Two days later however, and almost certainly tinged with a degree of sadness, the children were awarded a day's holiday to celebrate the proclamation of Edward VII as the next king of Great Britain. This was supplemented with a further week's holiday in June 1902 when the King was crowned.

As well as these great events involving the monarchy, the people of Roath and Cardiff did play major roles around the world. As mentioned earlier, the beginning of the century saw a war against the Boers in South Africa. Many Welsh soldiers went off to fight and after the war was over, their return to Cardiff was celebrated once again with a holiday for the children.



29<sup>th</sup> Monday: Admitted one child.  
Attendance not good. only 123 present this m.  
School closed this aft: in honour of return  
of Welsh Volunteers from the S. African War

**A day's holiday was awarded for the return of Welsh volunteers from the Boer War**

The school was often awarded holidays for visits by VIP's to Cardiff at that time. Several important people including the King visited Cardiff and one important occasion when the children were given a holiday was on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of October 1905 when Cardiff was awarded City status. The head teacher of the Girls' school stated "His majesty, the king, having declared Cardiff the Capital City of Wales.....ordered the Lord Mayor to declare a half day holiday to celebrate the occasion".

The visit of the Marquis of Bute and his new wife was deemed important enough for the granting of a day's holiday, as was the opening of the Queen Alexandra Dock on the 12th of July 1907. Another important visitor that earned the children a holiday was Lloyd George who came to the city in 1908, but a rather sad occasion on the 12th of June 1913 necessitated a half day suspension of school work. This was awarded when a charity International football match was played to raise money for the relatives left behind after the Senghenydd mining disaster when 439 men and boys were killed in Wales' worst ever mining disaster. Amongst many other school holidays was a long holiday awarded for the Coronation of George V and Queen Mary in June 1912 and in May 1922 the visit of Baden Powell, the Chief Scout was declared a time of celebration and freedom from school.

As well as chronicling important events and visits, the Log Books also provide us with a valuable social history and picture of what life was like for people living at that time. The various diseases around amongst children make for very interesting reading. Always common were the usual childhood illnesses such as measles, mumps, whooping cough and chicken pox except that at the turn of the century, these resulted in large epidemics that devastated the school's attendance. Indeed at times, it became so serious that HMI commented upon it.

29<sup>th</sup> Copy of Report of H. M. Inspector who visited This School on Jan: 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup>.  
 'The School has suffered very much from sickness and other causes which make for frequent absences. Also the curtailment of the School hours (though unavoidable under the circumstances) has left its mark to some extent on the progress of the children.  
 The School continues to be very well conducted and on the whole to do very good work.'

From an Inspection Report Early in the Century

Frequently whole families were excluded from school due to the presence of contagious illnesses within the household and these struck down pupils and staff alike. They included scarlet fever, ringworm even diphtheria and on the 13<sup>th</sup> of June 1913, a record was made of a child dying from this last disease.

"10<sup>th</sup>" Found the registers correctly marked  
 H. C. Burgess  
 "13<sup>th</sup> Monday: Admitted four children.  
 Percy Wilson reported have died at Sanatorium from Diphtheria."

Extract from Infant Log Book relating to the death of a pupil from diphtheria.

A further death occurred on the 26<sup>th</sup> of August 1918, but this time, it was a member of staff. A teacher died from pneumonia caused by a flu epidemic that was spreading through the area. Both these events must have brought about great sadness at the school but with various inoculation programmes, illnesses on a large scale became less of a problem and many diseases became a distant memory.

The school was becoming an established part of the community as the years rolled on, but as in every school, the head teachers had to deal with some naughty "customers". The Log Books record

incidents of theft and poor behaviour amongst some of the pupils. One particular group of brothers really pushed their luck too far in the Infants in 1909 and the head duly records:- "John, Willie and Harry Watts have given serious trouble lately. Have purchased a cane in their interest". No further record was made if they transgressed again.

As 1914 approached and Britain slowly drifted into the First World War against Germany, people must have thought that events were going to take place far away and wouldn't affect them or the school. How wrong they would be! When war was declared, Albany Road school was required for hospital purposes. The girls from that school were then transferred to Marlborough Road and the Infant department there was closed indefinitely. School was not re opened till the 5th of October 1914.

Several female members of staff were re-deployed to various departments as male teachers enlisted to fight for their country and others also departed as they enlisted for training in Military Hospitals to look after the wounded that returned from the Front. School life was being severely disrupted. On the 8<sup>th</sup> of July 1915, the head mistress of the Infants attended a reception at Crwys Road School for the return of Sergeant Major Barter VC from the war. He was a great hero in Cardiff and the event took place for moral boosting purposes. The headmistress must have been greatly impressed by this brave soldier for two weeks later he visited Marlborough Road School, no doubt to great acclimation from members of staff and pupils alike. The school began a War Savings Association in June 1914 with seventeen depositors, and by November of that year they had raised over £100. The pupils also began collections for the boys at the front and raised money to buy mufflers.

On the 11<sup>th</sup> of November 1918 the long awaited day came when hostilities ceased against Germany and the Armistice was signed. News of the signing of peace arrived in the school at about 10.35 am and after an interval, the school assembled "in the hall for a patriotic demonstration". A message for a week's holiday was received by the head teachers of the schools in Marlborough at 11.40 am and shortly afterwards the schools were dismissed. This was not the end of the repercussions of the war for the school, as many of the children had lost their fathers and for many years afterwards the school received donations from various organisations to support children whose fathers had made the great sacrifice during the war. Slowly members of staff who had survived returned to their peace time occupations but memories were raw and for many years to come, the school held annual two minute remembrances on the occasion of the signing of the Armistice to remember those that gave up their lives for the good of their country.

During the inter war years the schools tried to regain whatever semblance of normality they could achieve. In 1919, the schools had no heating as they had run out of sticks but the head teachers improvised in typical fashion by cutting up packing cases from the store rooms. In the same year, there was a rare accident for the time as a child called Ruth Jones was knocked down by a motor car and badly hurt outside the school. She must have been very careless or unlucky as the roads can't have been as busy as the roads are outside the school today

The pupils still had to cope with the normal range of childhood diseases and Inspectors to the school were swift to heap praise on the staff for returning to normal routine so soon after the War and offering the children high quality education. Holidays were still given to grateful children for special occasions and one important event occurred on the 25<sup>th</sup> of April 1923, when boxes of chocolates were distributed amongst the children as a gift donated by HRH Duke of York. This was to celebrate

his marriage the following day to Lady Elizabeth Bowes Lyon who we know today as the Queen Mother. These presents must have been received with enthusiasm and the popularity of the Queen Mother has not wavered since that day.

There was a regular turnover of staff during the inter war years and in the Infants' department, the only head of the school up to that time retired in 1924. She was Miss Alice Bale and rich praises were given even by HMI who noted that she "has been there for more than twenty years during which time she has done excellent work in supervising and organising the school. Her influence on the staff and the children is excellent and the conditions conduce to good work being done." She was replaced by a Mrs J Addie who was head for the next eight years, but she was replaced suddenly in 1932 by a temporary head due to her having a sudden illness from which she subsequently died.

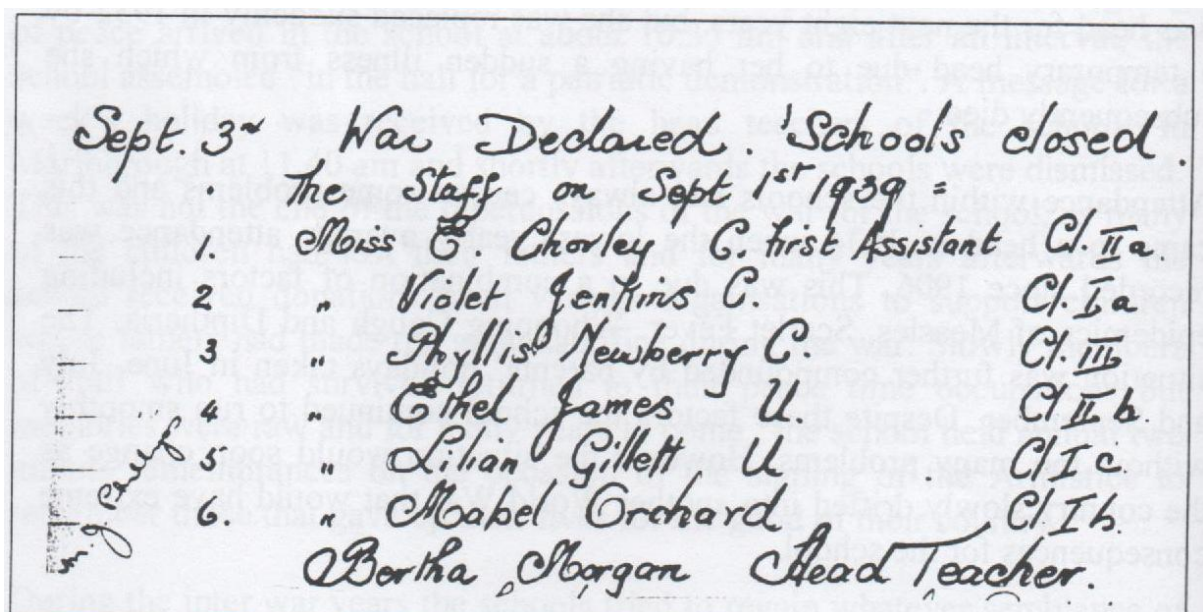
Attendance within the schools had always caused some problems and this came to a head in 1934 when the lowest yearly average attendance was recorded since 1906. This was due to a combination of factors including epidemics of Measles, Scarlet Fever, Whooping Cough and Diphtheria. The situation was further compounded by parents' holidays taken in June, July and September. Despite these factors the school continued to run smoothly without too many problems. However the situation would soon change as the country slowly drifted into another World War that would have extreme consequences for the school.

## The Influence of the Second World War on Marlborough School

Modern day pupils cannot begin to visualise the traumatic events that occurred in Roath and Cardiff during the Second World War and how these events influenced the lives of everyone in the City.

As war clouds began to gather in Europe the first indication that Marlborough would not escape its clutches occurred on the 28<sup>th</sup> of September 1938, almost a year before hostilities began. All Cardiff headteachers were summoned by the Director of Education to attend a meeting of Air Raid Precautions at the Technical College. This was taken a step further when on the following day, upon special orders from the same director the school closed and Civilian Respirators were issued to the children.

Despite life and school events continuing as normal, it must have come as no surprise to the people of Roath when on the 3rd of September 1939 war was declared and school was closed. This momentous and far reaching event was recorded in the Infant Log Book.



### Declaration of War as recorded in school log on September 1<sup>st</sup> 1939

The Infant department was taken over as a reserve First Aid Post although it was never used. Life continued as normal during this period known as the "Phoney War" although certain drills were rehearsed in case of air raids i.e. School ARP Drill was organised as follows:

**1a. Teacher Red Patrol** - Miss Jenkins takes children to Marlborough Road and Blenheim Road crossing, from whence they run home.

**b. Auxiliary Red Patrol** - Miss Orchard.

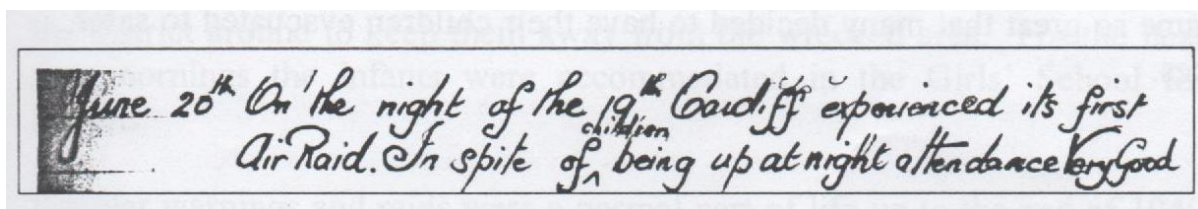


**2. Blue Patrol** - Miss Chorley conducts the children to Blenheim and Sandringham Road corner, then they run home.

**3. Green Patrol** - Miss Jones accompanies the children to the junction of Sandringham and Agincourt Roads and they run home.

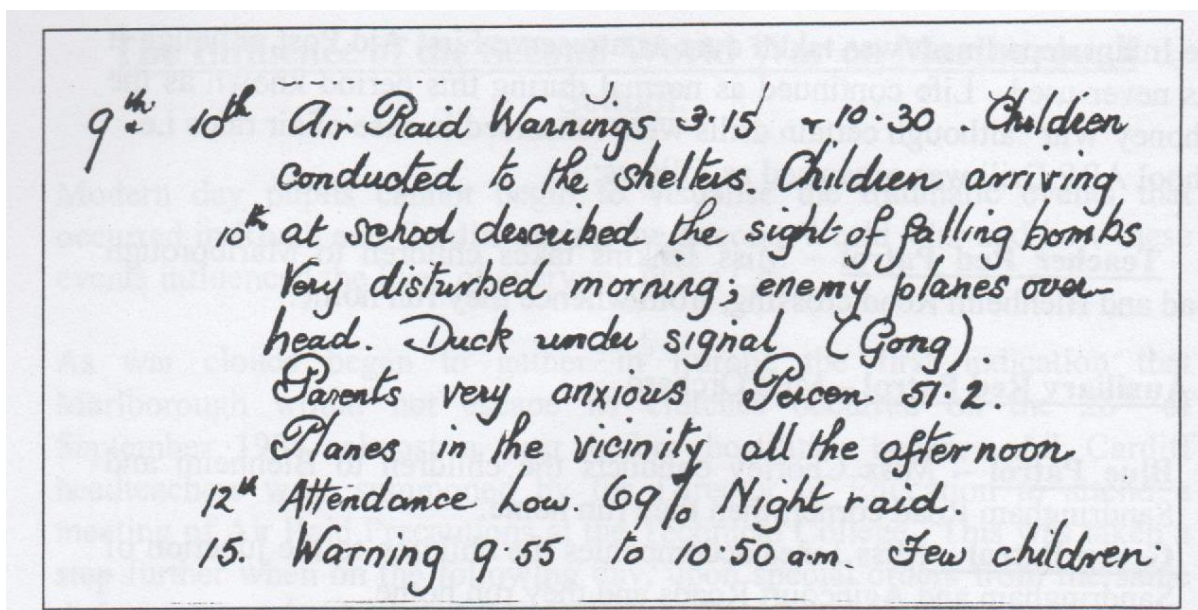
**4. Yellow Patrol** - Children remain in school - half in the headteacher's room and half in the staffroom (temporary arrangement until the air raid shelters are complete).

It was as well that these drills had been practised for on the 20<sup>th</sup> of June 1940, as recorded in the Log Book, the first Cardiff air raids took place.



#### Reports of raids in the school vicinity

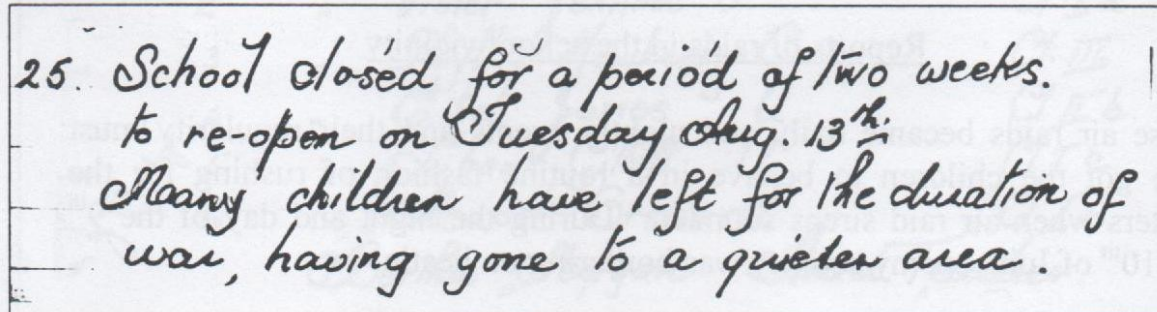
These air raids became daily and nightly events and their regularity must have got the children to behave in a routine fashion of rushing for the shelters when air raid sirens sounded. During the night and day of the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> of July, enemy activity was bordering on hectic.



#### Extensive raids on Cardiff cause considerable disruption to school life



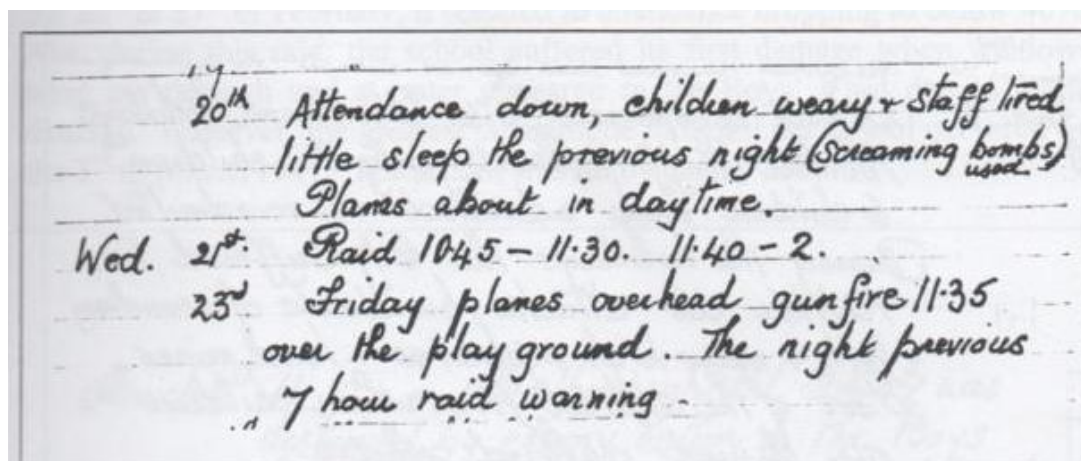
As a result these days of intense enemy action the corresponding few days saw an obvious drop in attendance at the school. In fact attendance on the 12<sup>th</sup> of July 1940 fell to 69% due to the night raid of the 11<sup>th</sup> of July. Another frenetic night of activity took place on the 19<sup>th</sup> of July 1940 and dashing to the air raid shelters became part of life. The effect on the lives of children must have been tremendous and the concern for their parents became so great that many decided to have their children evacuated to safer places.



25. School closed for a period of two weeks.  
to re-open on Tuesday Aug. 13<sup>th</sup>.  
Many children have left for the duration of  
war, having gone to a quieter area.

#### Evacuation of Children

This precaution seemed to have been wise for during the next few weeks, Cardiff became a regular target of the German Luftwaffe.



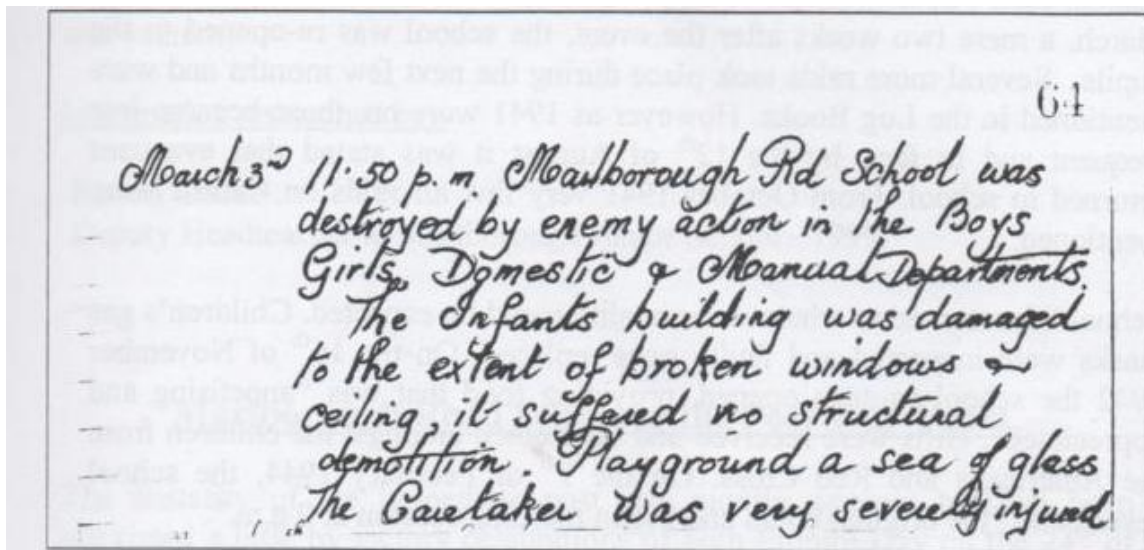
20<sup>th</sup> Attendance down, children weary & staff tired  
little sleep the previous night (screaming bombs)  
Planes about in daytime.  
Wed. 21<sup>st</sup> Raid 10.45 - 11.30. 11.40 - 2.  
23<sup>rd</sup> Friday planes overhead gun fire 11.35  
over the playground. The night previous  
7 hour raid warning.

#### Air raids lead to a drop in attendance of pupils

On the 3<sup>rd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> of September 1940 enemy activity reached a peak, and the headteacher described the attack "as the most terrible of those yet experienced. Bombs fell with swift whistling sounds and alarms were sounded. Wellfield Road and Albany Road suffered severely". The headteachers were asked by ARP to go early to school and the Infant's school was used to receive refugees from the devastated area. The Director of Education arrived at the school and advised taking in any children



The concerns shown seem to have been justified, for after the heavy raids of the 26<sup>th</sup> & 27<sup>th</sup> of February, it resulted in attendance dropping to below 46%. Also during this raid, the school suffered its first damage when windows were put through and a crater appeared in the Boys' Yard due to bomb damage. However, the greatest catastrophe to befall the school occurred on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of March 1941. The school was hit by enemy action.



**Report on the destruction of the school March 1941**

The effect this must have had on the pupils and staff can be summed up in the words of the Girls' headmistress. She said: "A terrible catastrophe took place last night to our beloved school. Through enemy action, the whole of the senior school, which housed the boys and the girls, suffered irreparable damage. High explosive bombs were dropped in this district and it is surmised that a stick of bombs demolished our building. Children have been asked not to come near school".

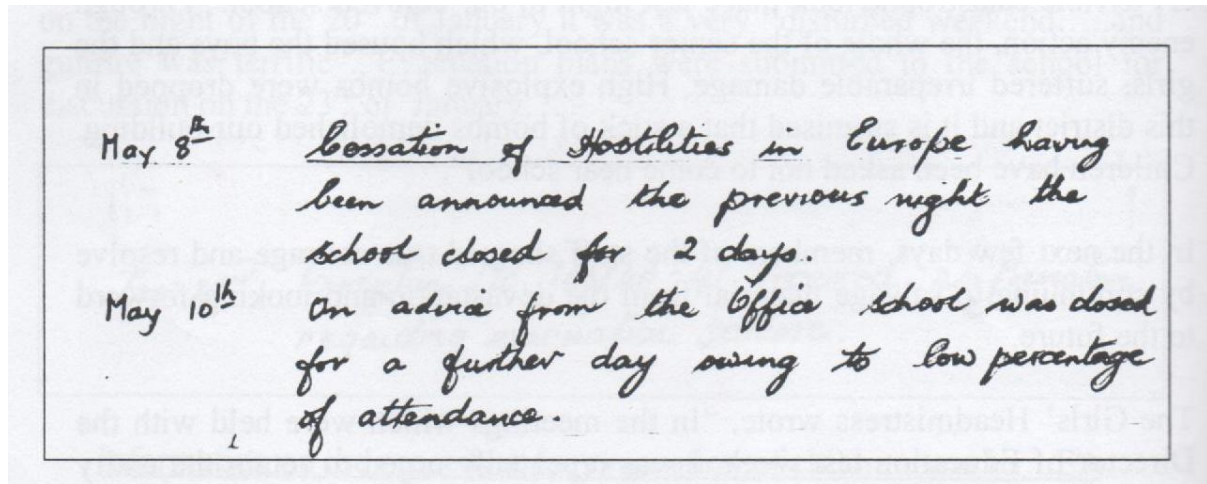
In the next few days, members of the staff showed true courage and resolve by continuing to salvage material from the devastation and looking forward to the future.

The Girls' Headmistress wrote, "in the meetings which were held with the Director of Education last week. I was repeatedly urged to retain the entity of my school to the utmost of my power, having been assured that this was the wish and policy of the Education Committee. The interim 4 - 17<sup>th</sup> of March has been spent in salvage work. Every member of staff has worked most earnestly and energetically to this purpose. It has been found impossible to enter the debris in Standards 1, 2, 3 and Form 2 classrooms, but a great deal of stock from other classrooms, as well as the three sewing machines and the gramophone have been retrieved and are now in use".

Indeed, such was the resolve of the headteachers and staff that by the 17<sup>th</sup> of March, a mere two weeks after the event, the school was re-opened to the pupils. Several more raids took place during the next few months and were mentioned in the Log Books. However as 1941 wore on, these became less frequent and in fact, by the 12<sup>th</sup> of August it was stated that evacuees returned to school. From October 1941 very few air raids on Cardiff were mentioned.

School life returned to whatever normality could be expected. Children's gas masks were inspected and faulty ones replaced. On the 16<sup>th</sup> of November 1942 the school canteen opened, providing food that was "appetising and appreciated". Gifts were received and distributed amongst the children from the Americans and Red Cross. On the 7<sup>th</sup> of February 1944, the school reverted to "the original hours and began morning session at 9 am".

Children received gifts of chocolate from America on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of March 1944 and again on the 14<sup>th</sup> December 1944. Life continued to move on as the war drew to a close and then on the 8<sup>th</sup> of May 1945, the great event, that had been greatly anticipated, took place.



**The end of the war is noted in the Log Book**

War was over in Europe and was shortly followed on the 5<sup>th</sup> of November by holidays for Victory in Japan.

The school had suffered terribly and the effect on the area would take years to overcome. However, the great fighting spirit of the school and community had been shown and would lead to further success and prosperity in the post war years.

**Information researched by:-**

Robert Cooke

Deputy Headteacher at Marlborough Junior School - 1999.



## **Marlborough Road School in the Post War Years.**

The austerity of the immediate post war months appears to have been alleviated a little by victory celebrations of both Empire Day on the 24<sup>th</sup> of May and Victory Day on the 7<sup>th</sup> of June 1946. Both contained suitably patriotic activities and thanksgiving services. These and the possibility of a nursery class for three to five year olds must have generated an air of optimism.

Winter however, saw a stark return to school closures and drops in attendance during the opening weeks of 1947 when deep snow and frozen pipes caused a great deal of disruption, both to the Marlborough Schools and Cardiff generally. The only high spot in an otherwise difficult year appears to have been the wedding of the Princess Elizabeth to Lieutenant Philip Mountbatten, in which the school closed for a day's celebration.

This was followed almost a year later with the birth of a son to the royal couple, the announcement of which was greeted with the raising of cheers and singing of the National Anthem.

An inspection followed some sixteen months later, which noted that a very happy atmosphere pervaded the school.

By December of 1950 work on the new Infant School building was well under way and though there was an outbreak of measles towards the end of the year, there seemed to have been only minimal disruption. By the summer term the school contributed whole-heartedly to the Schools' Festival of Britain Exhibition.

On the 25<sup>th</sup> of July 1951 the school held its final session in the old building and reassembled after the holiday in the new one, with the Junior Department now based in its current location.

Tragic news however followed shortly after Christmas, with the death of King George VI on the 6<sup>th</sup> of February. A wireless session in the infants was interrupted and the information was passed on to the junior department. The following day, a Royal proclamation was issued for Queen Elizabeth the Second who would be the next monarch of the country.

Feb 6<sup>B</sup>      Death of His Majesty King George VI.  
 During the morning session a Warburton  
 Lesson was interrupted and the announcement  
 heard, of the sudden passing of the King.  
 The tragic news was passed on to the Staff  
 and to the Junior Department.

" 7<sup>K</sup>      A letter was received concerning the Royal  
 Proclamations

" 8<sup>K</sup>      The Royal Proclamation of Queen Elizabeth II.  
 At 11.30 am the school assembled  
 in the Hall to hear the ceremony of  
 the Reading of the Royal Proclamation  
 which came, through the Wardens, from  
 the Porters of the City Hall, Cathays  
 Park. It was read by the Lord Mayor  
 Alderman A. Gwynn J.P. The ceremony  
 concluded with the singing of the  
 Welsh National Anthem and God  
 Save the Queen.

#### Recorded entry in Log Book of the death of George VI

On the 5<sup>th</sup> of June the new school was officially opened. It was one of five schools opened in Cardiff in 1952, three of which were to accommodate new housing estates, with Marlborough and Moorland Juniors being rebuilt because of war damage. Two hundred and sixty seven children were received on the opening day.



June 5<sup>th</sup>

The Rt Hon Florence Horsbrugh CBE. MP.  
Minister of Education, visited bandiff  
to proclaim officially open six  
schools and two Meals Kitchens +  
Dining Rooms., this being one of the  
schools included. A combined  
ceremony was held at Gabalfa  
County Primary School when a  
Plaque to commemorate the occasion  
was unveiled. In the absence of

Entry for the opening of the new Infant/Junior School

In May the schools celebrated the Coronation. Concerts were arranged and a local councillor came to present Coronation Mugs to the pupils. The children then received two ounces of sweets as a Coronation Gift from the Education Authority and the school was closed on the 9<sup>th</sup> of July to celebrate the Royal Coronation Visit.

19.20 A Coronation Concert was given for the Parents of the children: one day for those of the younger classes and the next for those of the upper ones. Both concerts were very well attended. Every class gave an item. These varied & included short plays, dancing, Percussion Band and Action Songs. Much hard work had been put in in preparations and rehearsals and the result was a very enjoyable performance. Many parents afterwards expressed their appreciation & collection taken both days totalled £15 which will be used for the benefit of the school.

1953

On the 19<sup>th</sup> Mr J Glamville Davies presented the School with a very beautiful framed Portrait of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. He acted on behalf of the Parents Association of which he is the present Chairman. Our grateful thanks go to the donor for this lovely gift which will grace our Assembly Hall.

May 21<sup>st</sup> During the morning session we were pleased to receive Councillor J Bass who came to present Coronation Mugs to the pupils. The ceremony was a brief one and included only singing by the pupils apart from the presentation. The entire school filed past the table and each child received a mug with the words of Councillor Bass who afterwards expressed his pleasure at being able to be present among us, and his appreciation of the singing.

Account of the Coronation Concert and presentation of Coronation Mugs to all children.



**The school's concert celebration for the Coronation**

By 1957 Empire Day appears to have become Commonwealth Day and though the school did not close on the 24<sup>th</sup> of May, a special concert was held which closed with the singing of the National Anthems.

This appears to have been the high spot of a rather difficult year for the Infants as the summer was blighted with mumps and September saw a severe outbreak of influenza. This was not a good time to stop the orange juice, a notification of which was received from Welfare Foods for under fives, on November 26<sup>th</sup>.

The Autumn term of 1959 saw the official Report of HMI Inspection which noted that since the previous one, a decade earlier, the general approach had moved on to more modern times.

After a succession of apparently milder winters, bad weather returned with a vengeance in 1963 in which once again freezing pipes and extreme cold resulted in school closures. This inauspicious beginning seems to have heralded a particularly settled year, followed by the opening of the Roath Clinic in Roath Court Road, on 4<sup>th</sup> of February 1964.

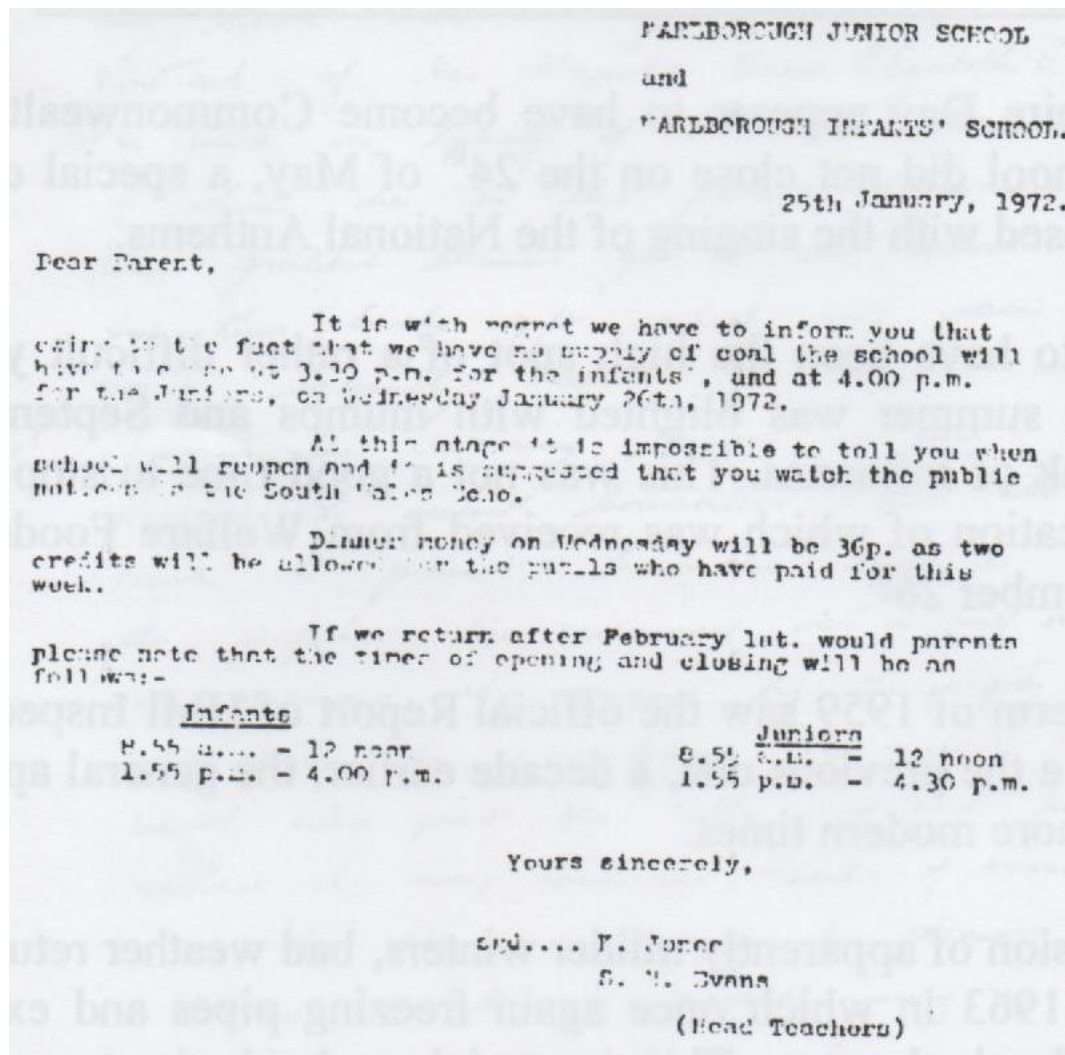
The records indicate a steady improvement in the wellbeing of children during the middle years of the sixties culminating in a resolution of the City Council to suspend corporal punishment in Infant and Junior Schools for a trial period of twelve months, on the 9<sup>th</sup> of February 1968.

The next year saw the celebrations of the Investiture of the Prince of Wales. with a week given over to an investiture exhibition. A concert was held on the 30<sup>th</sup> of June and on the 4<sup>th</sup> of July was a presentation of the Investiture Mugs, in which George Thomas, then Secretary of State for Wales,



gave a mug to each child. The year ended however on a more nostalgic note, with special events commemorating the withdrawal of the trolley bus service, scheduled for the 10th of January 1970.

Another notable withdrawal in the middle of 1971, was the discontinuance of free milk to pupils of seven and over at the instigation of a future Prime Minister. It was perhaps the harbinger of a period of political unrest as coal strikes disrupted school life in Spring 1972 with school closures caused by lack of coal and the community inconvenienced by power cuts.

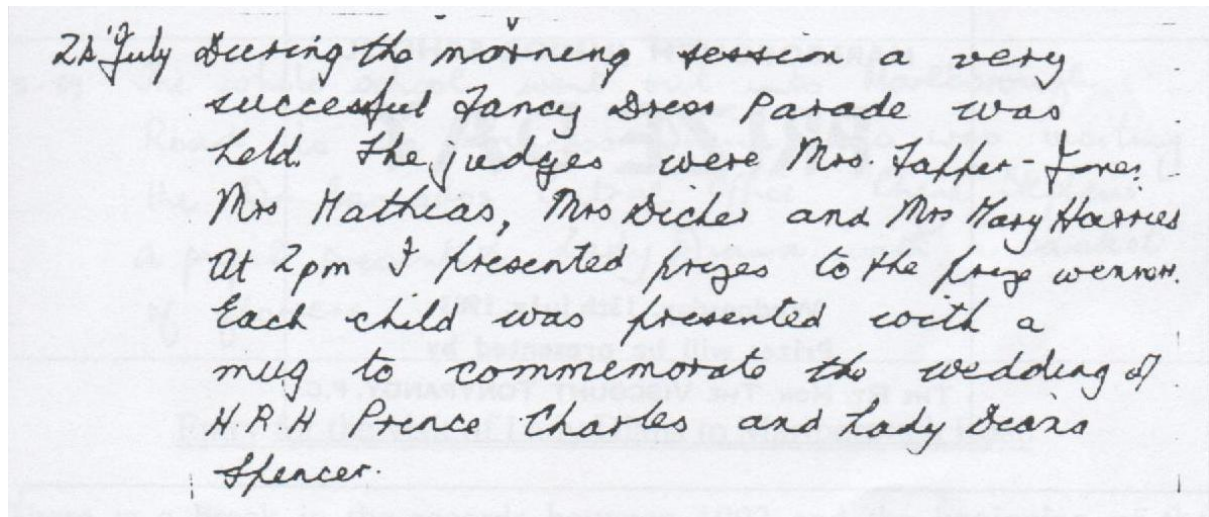


#### Notification sent to parents regarding the closure of the school due to the 1972 Coal Strike

Still there was a royal occasion to cheer everyone up and the school duly closed to commemorate the Silver Wedding of Her Majesty the Queen. This in turn was followed by the marriage of her daughter some twelve months later, when again the school was closed.

March 1974 saw building work with railings installed at the infant entrance for safety reasons. A number of burglaries ensued shortly after this, with the premises broken into several times throughout 1975 and 1976, with the headteacher's office ransacked on the third occasion. Vandalism at the end of 1978 saw wanton damage to windows and paint daubed on school property.

The wedding of the Prince of Wales to Lady Diana Spencer was the next notable occasion with the children presented with commemorative mugs

A photograph of a handwritten entry in a log book. The text is written in cursive on lined paper. It describes a 'Fancy Dress Parade' held on 24th July, with judges Mrs. Taffer-Jones, Mrs. Mathias, Mrs. Dicks, and Mrs. Mary Harris. It mentions prizes being presented at 2pm and each child receiving a mug to commemorate the wedding of H.R.H. Prince Charles and Lady Diana Spencer.

24<sup>th</sup> July During the morning session a very successful Fancy Dress Parade was held. The judges were Mrs. Taffer-Jones, Mrs. Mathias, Mrs. Dicks and Mrs. Mary Harris. At 2pm I presented prizes to the prize winners. Each child was presented with a mug to commemorate the wedding of H.R.H. Prince Charles and Lady Diana Spencer.

**Entry in Log Book for the marriage of Prince Charles and Lady Diana**

1982 began with a heavy snowfall and burst pipes, the first time the records mention school closures due to bad weather, since the severe weather of 1963. Several teachers, Mrs Orchard and Mrs Kenworthy Neale retired in the early years of the 1980's and the records begin mentioning the use of computers. In 1983 for the School Prize Day, a very famous public figure with close associations to the school came to present prizes. He was George Thomas MP. and Speaker of the House of Commons. In the 1930's he had taught at the school. He signed the Log Book as Follows

Lord Tonypandy  
13/7/83.  
Fifty one years ago, I  
started teaching in this  
School, G.T.

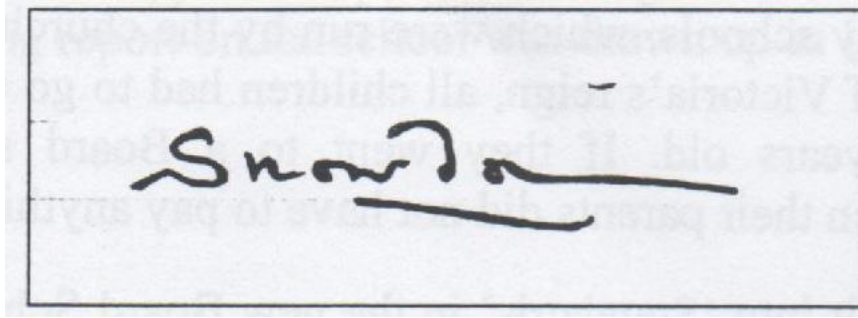
MARLBOROUGH JUNIOR SCHOOL  
**PRIZE DAY**  
Wednesday, 13th July, 1983  
Prizes will be presented by  
THE RT. HON. THE VISCOUNT TONYPANDY, P.C.

13<sup>th</sup> July Presentation of Prizes and Trophies was held during the afternoon. We were privileged and honoured to have The Rt. Hon. The Viscount Tonypandy, P.C., the former Speaker of the House of Commons as our chief guest.

Entries in the Log Book recording Visit of Lord Tonypandy to school in 1983

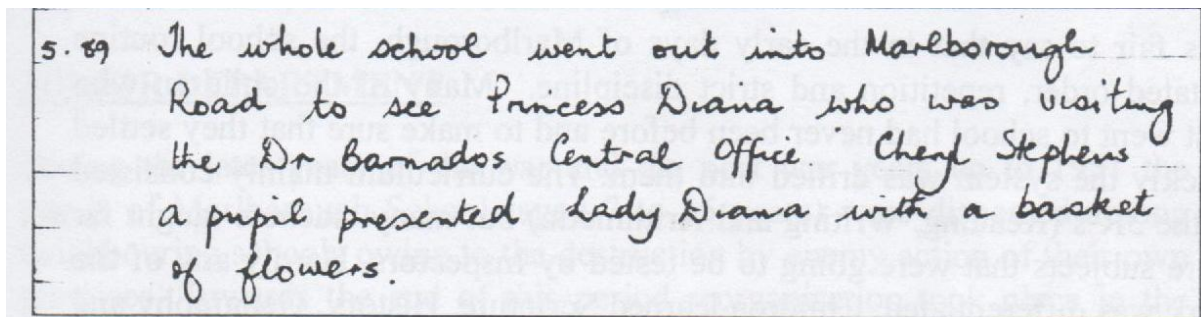
Another famous visitor to the school connected to Lord Tonypandy, was Lord Snowdon who was charged with the responsibility of taking photographs for the book being written by George Thomas entitled "My Wales". Whilst in Cardiff he signed the Log Book.



A handwritten signature, 'Snowdon', is written in dark ink within a rectangular border. The signature is stylized with a long horizontal line extending from the end of the word.

**Signature of Lord Snowdon in the Log Book**

On 2<sup>nd</sup> May 1989 Princess Diana visited Marlborough Road. All the school was out to welcome her and to present flowers.

A handwritten entry in a log book, dated '5.89', describes the visit of Princess Diana. The text is written in cursive and reads: 'The whole school went out into Marlborough Road to see Princess Diana who was visiting the Dr Barnados Central Office. Cheryl Stephens a pupil presented Lady Diana with a basket of flowers.'

**Entry for the visit of Lady Diana to Marlborough Road**

There is a break in the records between 1992 and the beginning of the Autumn term 1996. The most recent entries outline improvements such as the purchase of hall curtains and roller blinds. They mention also charity work for Red Nose Day and money raised for Refugee schools.

On February 1998 work was begun to convert one of the classrooms into a nursery unit and on the 30<sup>th</sup> of June the Infant School was successfully assessed for 'Basic Skills Quality Mark' as the first school to do so in Cardiff. A fitting and optimistic way to usher in the New Millennium.

**Information researched by:-**

Roger Ings  
Teacher at Marlborough Junior School - 1999.

## **Lessons and Punishment - Early in the Century**

At the start of Queen Victoria's monarchy, few children ever went to school. Some attended Sunday schools, which were run by the churches. However, by 1901, at the end of Victoria's reign, all children had to go to school until they were thirteen years old. If they went to a Board school, which Marlborough was, then their parents did not have to pay anything at all.

Year groups were split into 'Standards' in the new Board Schools that were built and these classes had their own classrooms and teacher. Pupils sat on wooden benches in rows and worked on wooden desks. Many wrote on slates in the early years of the century, as these could later be wiped clean. Some children had exercise books in which to write and older children had some text books and library books. However, these weren't very common.

It is fair to say that in the early days of Marlborough, the school routine dictated order, repetition and strict discipline. Many of the children who first went to school had never been before and to make sure that they settled quickly the system was drilled into them. The curriculum mainly consisted of the 3R's (Reading, Writing and Arithmetic) but many teachers taught far more subjects that were going to be tested by Inspectors. Hardly any of the work was differentiated. Children learned Scripture, History, Geography and Drawing, the boys were taught woodwork whilst the girls were given instruction in domestic duties which were cooking and ironing. When Marlborough was built it had a kitchen and laundry to cater for the girls' needs. This was later destroyed during the war.

Some children did occasional scientific experiments and all children had PE lessons in the playground. These could take the form of running, jumping and even playing football. However, for most pupils it meant marching round and round and doing arm swinging exercises. This almost military form of exercise was called drill and was supposed to instil in pupils the concept of routines and conformity.

The writing lessons that the children were given involved the copying of copperplate sayings such as "Children should be seen and not heard" or "Waste not, want not" and so on. The walls of the classrooms were often sparsely decorated with maps showing British dominions and sometimes information charts. Also in Marlborough, stuffed bird models such as Petrels were donated by the School Board to enthuse the pupils. The headteacher had overall responsibility for the curriculum and frequent references were made in the school Log Books to their view on the work being undertaken in classrooms that they visited. Her Majesty's Inspector of Schools came once a year and they left a copy of the progress being made in the school at that time. The following report on the school was drawn up in 1953.

## **Report by H M Inspectors on Marlborough County Primary School Cardiff**

Inspected on 22<sup>nd</sup>, 23<sup>rd</sup> & 24<sup>th</sup> June 1953

### **JUNIOR DEPARTMENT**

During the later years of the war and the post war years up to 1951 the pupils of Marlborough School (aged 7 to 15 years) were dispersed among neighbouring schools owing to the destruction by enemy action of their own premises. Towards the end of this period reorganisation took place in the area and when the new Infants' School on the site was completed in 1951, the Juniors were gathered together once more to form a Junior Department in the premises formerly occupied by the infants. In the short time this school has been re-assembled. it has succeeded in welding itself into a happy, hard - working community largely through the harmonious co-operation of the Head Master and his staff.

The 320 pupils on roll are divided into two streams according to ability except in the first year when the boys and girls are taught separately. Next year this division in the first year will be replaced by classification according to ability. The "B" division in Class IV contains a number of "A" pupils who are too young to proceed to secondary schools at the beginning of next session. This rather unsatisfactory grouping of pupils with a wide range of ability is likely to continue for the next year or two. by the end of which time it will cease by the Authority's regulations for transfer. The following are the numbers of pupils in each class:-

I(GIRLS)	44	I (BOYS)	43
II	46	II	30
III	45 "A" STREAM	III	31 "B" STREAM
IV	46	IV	35

The premises, though intended for an Infants' School, are on the whole suitable for their present use except that the cloakroom accommodation is somewhat restricted. This restriction will be felt more acutely if, as expected, the number of pupils on roll increases. The accommodation includes eight classrooms, a Hall, a Head Teacher's room, a staff room (rather sparsely furnished) and two cloakrooms with four wash basins in each. Sanitary provision comprises two toilets for the staff, an urinal stall and 8 w.c.s. for the boys and 12 w.c.s. for the girls. The Hall is in constant use for a variety of purposes, including dining, broadcast lessons, folk dancing, singing and handwork lessons. If two or three classrooms were wired for the reception of broadcast lessons, the Hall would be freed for occasional lessons in physical education during wet weather.

Dinners are brought in containers from a Central Kitchen and are served in the Hall. An average of 45 pupils take dinner at school and about 270 take milk daily.

The Head Master was appointed to this post when the school re-opened in September 1951. He has served for many years under the Authority both as an assistant and as a Head Master. His relationship with both pupils and staff is a friendly one, showing a discreet combination of gentleness and firmness, with the result that the tone of the School is excellent. He is ably assisted by a team of eight qualified assistant teachers and a full-time teacher of Welsh: the proportion of men to women teachers is three to six. The attitude of the First Assistant to the pupils is one of sympathy and understanding. The teacher in charge of Class II in the "A" stream was absent during part of the inspection.

A corporate act of worship is conducted in the Assembly Hall every morning except Friday, when the pupils receive Religious Instruction in their classrooms. On two mornings a week this service is taken by the Head Teacher; on alternate Tuesdays the service is in Welsh and is taken by the Welsh Teacher; on the other mornings the teachers take the service in turn. Individual pupils often take part by reading portions of the Scriptures. The pupils know many hymns, which they obviously find pleasure in singing.

The teaching is at all stages competent and thorough and the pupils make very satisfactory progress. In Arithmetic the standard attained is good and the written work in this subject is neat and regularly marked. The pupils read widely, have an extensive vocabulary and are generally well informed. They express themselves with facility in conversation and their response is at all times lively and interested; it is felt that their initiative might be further developed by the provision of more opportunities for finding things out for themselves. In English lessons the emphasis tends in some classes to be on the more formal aspects of language study; more opportunity in these classes for creative work in both prose and verse and for a wider exploration of all types of literature is recommended. Some interesting work was being done by the younger pupils in free composition. Several courses of broadcast lessons are followed regularly, but some of the listening groups (two classes combined) are too large for the pupils to derive full benefit from the lessons. This difficulty will be resolved when some of the classrooms are wired for the reception of broadcast programmes. The articles made by the girls in Needlework and by the boys in Handwork are neat and well finished, and the work seen in Art was interesting and varied. The Head Master is building up a good stock of text-books and intends increasing the supply of readers in the lower forms, where the present supply is inadequate and results in some pupils attempting to read books that are too difficult for them.

In addition to the Welsh teacher, two members of staff and five of the pupils are Welsh - speaking. The Head Master is anxious to foster in the School an interest in Wales and in the Welsh language, an aim which is enthusiastically shared by the Welsh teacher. About 80 per cent of the pupils learn Welsh and they receive a daily lesson in the subject. The course is broadly conceived and includes, in addition to language study, the learning of songs and poems, the singing of "penillion", the relating of Welsh legends and some study of the geographical and historical background.

In Physical Education the boys and girls are taken separately, the former being taught by the men teachers and the latter by the women teachers, except for Class 1 Boys, which is taken by the class teacher, a woman. Only the girls' work was seen during the Inspection. The classes seen in the

playground were in the main inactive and lacked enjoyment and vigour. Where the less formal work was being tried, insufficient coaching and guidance were given to the girls and the work became aimless. If this subject is to make a worthwhile contribution to the welfare of the girls, it must be taken regularly and guidance should be given to the teachers to enable them to build up progressive schemes of work both in the games and gymnastic lessons. Instruction in folk-dancing is given to pupils in Classes IV; the folk dances seen had been thoroughly learnt by the pupils, who obviously enjoyed the lessons.

There is a flourishing Parents' Association connected with the school which meets about four times a year for lectures, discussion groups and other social activities.

The impression gained during the Inspection was that the School is producing courteous, well-mannered pupils with a sense of responsibility towards their School and towards the community.

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### **Inspection Report Infant Department**

The premises of this department, which have recently been re-decorated and are in good condition, were built in 1900. They include a central hall, eight classrooms, a Head Mistress' room and a staff room. There are two cloakrooms, one at each end of the school, and lavatory provision includes eight w.c's and a urinal for the boys and 10 w.c's for the girls. Heating and lighting are adequate, and the school is provided with a large, asphalted playground.

The staff consist of the Head Mistress and eight assistant teachers, together with a visiting teacher of Welsh.

About 38 pupils receive the mid-day meal which is cooked in the central hall. Two helpers assist with the serving of the meals; one of them also attends to the distribution of cod-liver oil and orange juice to the pupils under five years of age.

The 285 pupils enrolled are classified as follows:-

Standard	1a	40
Standard	1b	37
Class	1a	39
Class	1b	32
Class	2a	36
Class	2b	38
Transition Class		26



Good use is made of the central hall by all classes. The school is fitted with a wireless receiving set and broadcast lessons are included in the curriculum. Much attention is paid to Music and Movement.

The standard of work in Standard 1a is good. The pupils are keen and intelligent, and the teacher stimulates their interest in several ways. The level of attainment in Standard 1b is considerably lower. These pupils require a much more practical approach to their work, particularly in number. The syllabuses in history and geography should be revised so as to be more intimately related to their experience.

Sound work is being done in Classes 1a and 1b; the pupils are encouraged to take an interest in their classroom; they work well, and they reveal an interest in art, handiwork and nature study. The teacher and pupils co-operate successfully in Class 2a. but the approach to the work in Class 2b should be less formal; all the different interests of the pupils should be used to the full to ensure that they make satisfactory progress.

The Transition Class is small and consists of pupils who are somewhat less mature or who have been absent frequently from school. The teacher is wisely giving each pupil as much individual attention as possible. Lack of space considerably restricts the work of the pupils who are under five years of age. The programme of work should be more elastic and use should be made of such media as clay, dough, water and sand. Most of the available equipment consists of the sense-training type and hardly satisfies these pupils, or calls forth much effort from them. It is suggested that this class should be restricted to 30 in number and that a Nursery helper be appointed. The teacher is obviously interested in young children and plays with them, but it would be an advantage if the group were divided into smaller units to facilitate progress in language based upon the pupils' own experience.

A very happy atmosphere pervades the school. The pupils feel secure and have a respect for, and confidence in, their teachers. Their attitude to each other and to grownups is most friendly. There is too, obvious co-operation between the Head Mistress and her staff; the parents take a very real interest in the school; and the caretaker and his wife take a pride in maintaining the premises in a clean condition.

Playtime in the early days of Marlborough was not long. School was for work and learning, but children did play games in the playground before school began and when they were allowed out at lunchtime.

Often the boys' playground was bigger than the girls' and this was because they played rougher games. Boys enjoyed games such as football and cricket, whilst girls' required less space for skipping and counting games. No mixing was allowed between boys and girls and in Marlborough, a wall segregated the two sexes with a locked gate for access by the caretaker to both departments.

From the school's opening in 1900, almost up to the modern age, children could be given corporal punishment for certain misdemeanours. Nowadays, children are not caned or beaten when they are at school but early on in the century, hitting children was common. Teachers and the School Board sanctioned corporal punishment, believing it was the only way to make children behave and learn. Certain teachers had permission to administer the cane and the punishment given had to be recorded in the Punishment Book. The Punishment Book for Marlborough Boys' School in the Fifties is still in the school's possession and makes interesting reading when studying the sentence administered for different acts of ill discipline and poor behaviour. Corporal punishment was banned in Cardiff Schools in 1968.

NAME	OFFENCE	PUNISHMENT	STAMP BY	HT'S SIGNATURE
51. K. T. DAVIES	MISBEHAVIOUR DURING ASSEMBLY. THIRD OFFENCE.	1 STROKE ON EACH HAND	H.T.	K. T. Davies
52. G. T. DAVIES	BULLYING FELLOW BOYS	1 STROKE ON EACH HAND	H.T.	K. T. Davies
53. J. T. DAVIES	DISOBEYING AN ORDER VIZ. PLAYING IN INFANTS' PLAYGROUND.	1 STROKE ON EACH HAND	H.T.	K. T. Davies
54. J. T. DAVIES	SITTING AT DESK WITH HEADPHONES.	1 STROKE ON LEFT HAND	H.T.	K. T. Davies
55. J. T. DAVIES	INSUBORDINATE	1 STROKE ON LEFT HAND	H.T.	K. T. Davies
56. J. T. DAVIES	Repeated misbehaviour during lesson.	1 STROKE ON EACH HAND	H.T.	K. T. Davies
57. J. T. DAVIES	Continued refusal to work	1 STROKE ON LEFT HAND	H.T.	K. T. Davies
58. J. T. DAVIES	DISOBEYING AN ORDER VIZ. CICKING IN PLAYGROUND.	1 STROKE ON EACH HAND	H.T.	K. T. Davies
59. J. T. DAVIES	DISOBEYING AN ORDER VIZ. MISBEHAVING IN LINES.	1 STROKE ON EACH HAND	H.T.	K. T. Davies

The extract above was taken from the School's Punishment Book dated 1953

Today pupils are disciplined by being sent to the headteacher, their parents being summoned to discuss improvement and also by withdrawal of privileges. Indeed school life has changed greatly since those early days in 1900.

#### Information researched by:-

Robert Cooke

Deputy Headteacher at Marlborough Junior School - 1999.

## Reminiscences

This section is dedicated to the memories of past pupils covering almost the whole century that the school has served the community.

### School Life in Marlborough Road in the 20's.

About seventy years ago, I was a pupil at Marlborough School and I walked to school four times a day. The journey was from school to Gordon Road, where I was born in 1919.

The route I undertook was out of Gordon Road across into Richmond Road, out of there and across into Northcote Road from there I went into City Road and across into Glenroy Street. I walked the whole length of Glenroy Street and into a little lane that lead past the "Claude" Hotel. I went across Albany Road to the field on the corner of Albany and "Blenheim" with its big Black Board (Notice Board) asking for contributions to build a Baptist Church on that site. It was then on to "Marlborough". I turned right into "Marlborough" then left into "Agincourt" and so, into that "Boys" entrance well out of sight of "Infants" and "Girls".



1933 Boys School - Teacher Mr Lord

We were then in the playground. On our left was a red brick building, where we learned woodwork. As you entered, you were aware of two strong odours "Red Pine" (lovely) and cheap and easy to work with - "Iodine" (horrible). We kids regularly cut ourselves with chisels, planes or saws and out came the bottle of "Mahogany stain coloured" Iodine. The teacher would slosh it on, and we'd carry on carving. To the right of the entrance to the playground were the Boys' toilets, well away from the main building. Obviously at the time one could not have toilets indoors, unheard of then and just next to them was "THE SHED"

"THE SHED" was locked and had a green door. In that, Mr Egan, my teacher at that time, parked his "FRANCIS BARNETT" motor bike, which had a flat oblong petrol tank. I liked Mr Egan and we boys gathered around the "Green Door" at five to nine each morning, waiting for the sound and sight of Mr Egan. I can still visualise him now, flat cap (no helmets in those days) goggles, scarf and heavy duty coat. No wonder we worshipped him and as he wheeled the magic machine into the shed with the Green Door (opened by Mr Egan with his own key). We breathed a sigh of satisfaction and knew that all was well with the World!

If you came away from the toilets and diagonally across the playground you came to the entrance of the Boys School. You then went up two flights of stone steps to the Assembly Hall. That was shaped like this:-

It was a rectangular shape, simply a long building and on one long side, windows overlooking the playgrounds. On the other long side and two short sides were classrooms with windows overlooking Marlborough Road. In the centre of the assembly hall was a small dais or platform. There every morning after marching in quietly we stood for morning prayers, led by a slight, elderly, gentleman, wearing a grey suit. He was always dressed like this and always smelt of carbolic soap. He was our Headmaster Mr Francis. When Mr Francis stood on that platform, looked around the assembly, utter silence descended on Marlborough. Mr Francis always started Morning Prayers with the same words and those have rung in my ears ever since those far off years

"Almighty and everlasting God"

Back in the classrooms, they were always light and airy in the main, because glass partitions looked out on to the assembly hall on one side and on to Marlborough Road on the other. There was a nice big open coal fire behind the teacher's desk (alright for him) nice and cool for us kids. There were no distractions like telephones, televisions or computers or anything really. It was just us and Mr Egan, the blackboard and chalk. I remember him teaching us how to draw a wheel! (motor bike naturally). The wheel was lying flat on the ground and it was really difficult trying to draw a wheel getting those arcs and curves correct.

I also have clear memories of the other members of staff. There was a certain Mr Bull. He was short and stout, wore a bowler hat, smoked a pipe, and had lost the forefinger on one hand. Mr Morgan was an earnest man, wore a round trilby type hat and lived in Colchester Avenue. Mr McIlwaine was an Irish gentleman of Catholic persuasion and lived next door to St Peter's Church in Bedford Street. Mr Rees I remembered vividly. He frightened me. His face was very red face (apoplectic), he was short, very short and had grey hair. He was the Geometry Teacher and would take his huge wooden compass to the blackboard, instruct us thus - "Describe an Arc". I was miles out. started thinking of Noah - and Mr Rees, if you did not pay attention, would throw not only the chalk at you, but the

lump of wood and felt, used to rub out the chalk as well! You had to learn quickly how to duck . I was dreading going into his class one term, until my mother wrote to me in Porthcawl, where I was on holiday and said that Mr Rees has retired!!!! I was elated.

The Headteacher was Mr Francis . He was a weak little man to look at, but a mighty powerful headmaster to deal with in his study. On the mantelpiece were two long canes and I saw him use them once. I did not know that a cane could go up in the air, so far, or, come down on a boy's hand so fast. It whistled down and thwacked on the palm of the poor wretch shivering on the carpet. He then tweaked at the boy's hand indicating he should hold it out again and again. I froze. This was on a Friday afternoon. On Sunday morning, my father took me to Tredegarville Church and three pews in front of us sat Mr Francis! I still, seventy years on, find myself unable to equate these two profound events, on Friday the cane is in his hand, on Sunday the Bible is in his hand. It seems seventy years on, that we have put down the cane, and the Bible.

Mr Francis retired and so entered the new Headmaster - Mr Theophilus . He was as different as chalk and cheese. He was a big man, wore black rimmed glasses a dark Hombrera hat and black overcoat. That's the only picture I have of him in my mind , and he lived in Llwyn-y-Grant Road at the top of Penylan Hill.

One last teacher who lives in my memory for ever and deserves a special mention was a slight, young, earnest man, teaching the infant class in the hall. He was Mr George Thomas (call me George) - later to become Lord Tonypany. He was very popular with one and all.

The classroom would have been strange for modern day pupils as well . The ink wells of course were in the right-hand top corner of our desk and an 'ink monitor' had the task to fill the ink wells! On the wall in my class, I remember a faded water-colour entitled "Zermatt and the Matterhorn" I never found out why or, who Zermatt was? Our class numbered about thirty. I remember Mr Egan trying to teach us Algebra. After putting the symbols i.e.  $A=A+B$  etc on the board ,at the bottom of the sum Mr Egan wrote the letters Q.E.D. He explained it was Greek for, Latin for "Quo-Erat Demonstrandum" - Trains As Demonstrated. One bright wit from the back of the class (I think it was Ginger Ellis) shouted out "Quite Easily Done!" Cheers went all round at this quip. Another day of great excitement was when we all went to the Gas Works! Up came the buses to the Agincourt Road entrance and off we went to Ferry Road and the Cardiff Gas Light and Coke Company. That beats your present "trips to the continent". Anyway, it was a hot, dusty day, but the bus ride was nice . Next day we all had to write an essay entitled "A Visit to the Gas Works" - I Ask You!

Another memory I had of the school was Armistice Day. We all assembled at the eleventh hour, on the eleventh day of the eleventh month to remember with two long minutes, something that had happened twenty years before 1914 - 1919 and then to sing a Hymn that started

God the Omnipotent King who ordainest  
Thunder thy chariot, thy lightning thy sword

I recall thinking, as I sang- "I hope I don't meet HIM in the dark"



No account of the school would be complete without a mention of the lads in my class. These included:-

George Taxil - 6 Melrose Ave

Colin Sparks, Ilton Road 1

Ben Fowler, Newport Road

Rees John, Albany Road

Billy and Bobby Blake (identical twins) St Peter Street

John Connory, City Road

Gwyn Knapp. Richmond Road

Kenneth Tugwell. Richards Terrace

Clive Corke, Marlborough Road

That's not bad Norm. - 10 out of 30 after 60 years.

Let's come up-to-date, now, before I put this pen down. Grace Boston my Grand-daughter asked me to say something for her about Armistice day so I said:

The leaves so brown. came tumbling down,

On the classrooms in Marlborough Road.

Then Grandpa, went away. to the War

And the Germans dropped bombs

And the classrooms were. no more.

I still see the trees

When I walk, Marlborough way,

And think what happened that 'Long-Ago' Day

Best Love and Regards to all at "Marlborough"

Norman Billinghamurst.

## **School memories -Marlborough Road.**

I first attended the school at Marlborough in 1930 and I can remember my first day at school. I was totally overawed by the occasion. One of my clearest memories of the occasion was that of meeting my teacher, a certain Miss Gillard. She was a tall lady and was dressed in a long dark dress down to her ankles. I cannot recall clearly but I probably drew on a slate with chalk or a slate pencil.



**Infant School 1930**

My initial school was the Infants where I studied reading, tables, drawing, sums and singing. I later proceeded to the Junior school where we did arithmetic, drawing, nature study, geography, history, spelling, singing, english, and composition. The girls in the school also did sewing, raffia work and knitting whilst the boys had woodwork instruction.





Marlborough Kitchen 1920



Woodwork Class Marlborough School Circa 1920

The work we undertook was quite demanding and I can remember having tests in most subjects regularly. I always liked stories and my favourite subject was reading.

Unlike children today, I don't remember going on school trips or outings, but we did dress up on St David's Day. This was a special occasion and I remember wearing a daffodil costume and doing Welsh dancing. In the afternoon we were allocated a half day holiday, a custom which is no longer practised in schools. Christmas was another special day in Marlborough but in all my time there, I was always disappointed never to be asked to be in a Christmas play.

We didn't do P.E. but I think we did Physical Jerks.

At playtime we had great fun. We played at skipping, touch, mob, racing and hopscotch. At dinner time I went home as I lived very near to the school and then returned for the afternoon session.

I remember my classroom had big high windows and wooden desks for two to sit together. The teacher had a large desk and we all sat facing her. I can't remember any heating radiators, but I believe that in the school we had a sort of coal boiler. There was also a long pole with a hook on the end to open and shut the windows as the classrooms could get very stuffy at times. As is the case in Marlborough school today, our drawings were put on the wall for everyone to admire.

Some of our teachers were very nice, but I was a little bit scared of some of them. They could be very strict indeed and didn't suffer fools lightly. However, if you were good, they were fine.

Memories written by:-

Nancy Keir ( Nee Shepherd) Pupil at Marlborough 1930-37.

## **Marlborough School in the Twenties.**

Below is printed in full the letter received from Mrs L H Butcher, recalling some of her memories of Marlborough School from the twenties.

Earls Court Road.  
Penylan,  
Cardiff.  
23" November 1999

Dear Sir,

I refer to our recent pleasant conversation in your office regarding the forthcoming centenary of the school.

I attended the school between 1919-1927 under my maiden name of Lilian Hester (Hetty) Hatherwell having started school originally at a small ChurchSchool in Somerset.

One of my earliest memories was the fire at St Edward's Church when we evacuated the school because of possible danger to students and the school. it was many years later before St Edward's was rebuilt.

When I started at Marlborough I found it strange after the Church School. particularly as I now had to attend Welsh lessons, which worried me very much. Indeed after one altercation with the Welsh teacher, I was made to stand out in front of the class and reduced to tears. When I was met by my father at lunchtime, he could see I was upset and decided he would speak to the Head to see what was the matter. While we were in the Head's office. a teacher came in and ran to my father, calling him by his Christian name and promptly kissed him. This so upset me to see another lady, other than my mother, kissing my father, I aimed a kick at her! However, everything turned out very well when they explained to me that the teacher had been a Red Cross nurse in the 1914-1918 War and had nursed my father at hospital in France.

Indeed, my lifelong association with the Red Cross began when I joined as a junior whilst still at Marlborough, and after many years I ended up as Commandant in Cardiff. One of the many highlights was attending St Paul's Cathedral in 1946 as one of the three, selected from South Wales to attend the Thanksgiving Parade.

I trust the above will be of assistance to you and I send my best wishes for a successful Centenary Celebration.

Yours sincerely.

L H Butcher  
(Formerly Jackson nee Hatherell)





Photograph of Marlborough Girls School mid 1920's. Mrs Butcher third pupil from left.

### **MARLBOROUGH ROAD SCHOOL 1928 - 1935.**

I was born in Cardiff in 1924 and lived in Trafalgar Road. At the age of 4 years I started to attend the Infants School at Marlborough Road. The only time my mother escorted me to school was the very first day, after that I was on my own! How times have changed. My teacher was Miss Harding, a lovely lady who everyone admired and respected. I recall that she lived in Sandringham Road near the school.

The Infant School was mixed, but on going up to the Junior School the boys were segregated from the girls. My main teacher in the juniors was George Thomas, later to become Lord Tonypandy and the Speaker of The House of Commons. Mr Thomas was a young student down from the Rhondda and apparently Marlborough Road School was his first appointment. However, George was a marvellous teacher and in 1935 got me through the Eleven Plus and I then went on to Cardiff High School.



George Thomas who taught in Marlborough in the Thirties and later became an MP. and Speaker at the House of Commons

The Headmaster at Marlborough at that time was a Mr Theophilus and the Assistant Head was Mr Horton. I always recall at the end of the afternoon class, we would all gather in the Assembly Hall and sing "Now the day is over, night is drawing nigh, shadows of the evening creep across the sky". At least those were the opening lines. The gas lights would then be turned off and we would rush off home.

I played football for Marlborough Road in the first team in the schools league and could have gone far in that sport, but unfortunately, Cardiff High was a rugby-only school and football was taboo!

I loved Marlborough Road School, both Infant and Junior and it was a sad night in 1941 when the Germans saw fit to place a land mine on it, taking away the main building and all of Agincourt Road as well. Although I didn't know it at the time, my wife-to-be, Linda was a pupil at Roath Park School and used to visit Marlborough for cookery lessons once a week, likewise the boys from Stacey Road School would visit for woodwork lessons. All the facilities were available at Marlborough. They must have taught Linda well because she is a marvellous cook and has been since we got married in 1948.

As mentioned earlier, segregation was the name of the game in the juniors, and I remember the wall which went the length of the school yard, keeping boys from girls or was it vice versa? There was a door in the wall at the far end and the lock had been conveniently broken.....but "God help" any boy found in the girls yard at "playtime". Off he would be sent to Mr Kinsey. He was the Master delegated to give the "cane" and boy could he weald that stick!

Looking back at those days, it could be termed possibly the "best years of one's life". No worries, carefree and everything to look forward to....but, little did we know what was around the comer. On the 3rd of September 1939. War was declared, the world changed completely and really hasn't been the same since!

Kind Regards for the centenary.

John Hall. (Pupil 1928-1935).

## **Remembering Marlborough Road school.**

### **Before my time.**

My Aunt Dorothy attended Roath Park Girls School in the 1920's. When she was in the top class (standard 7, age 14). she remembers marching to Marlborough Road on alternate Friday's for Laundry lessons. They were told what to bring from home to wash - a pillow slip, a tablecloth or some item of clothing. In the Laundry they were given 2 bowls each, one for washing and one for rinsing, together with soap, starch and blue. Having washed and dried the item, they had to iron and fold it properly. On the other alternate Friday, they went to Albany Road for Cookery.

### **My time.**

I was born in 1938 and until I was eleven we lived in Amesbury Road. I started school in 1943. At this time, my father was serving as a radar mechanic in the RAF. My mother was at home looking after my baby brother.

I can remember waiting outside the Headmistress's room with my mother on the day I started school, together with the other children who started on that day, most of whom also had their mothers with them. It was a traumatic time and one I can still vividly remember.

### **The teachers.**

Unfortunately, I have only very superficial memories of my Infant Schoolteachers. I can do better with teachers at Roath Park Juniors and better still with those at Lady Margaret High School for Girls - but of course attitudes to school and all future learning depended on the excellent foundation which we received in the Infants.

I can't even remember the name of the Headmistress when I started. I think she died during my first year in the school and we were told at the start of the new term. Her successor was Miss Holland, who was still there when my brothers were in the school in the 1950's. The teachers I remember are:

- Mrs Davies, who was plump, cuddly and white-haired.
- Miss Newberry who was tall and wore a fox-fur complete with head and feet. This was very fashionable at the time.
- Mrs Morris was younger than the others and wore a brown silky dress.
- Miss James played the piano for assembly. She was older and looked a bit like a cartoon witch and caused us a lot of mirth.





**1943 Photograph of Miss Newberry's's Class at Marlborough**

It may have been due to the War that all the teachers were female and some appeared (by my estimate) to be well over retirement age.

There were two classes for each year in the infants. These were known by the teacher's names ("Mrs Morris's Class, rather than Year 3"). At age 7, we went into Standard 1, the start of the Junior School.

Standard 1A and 1B, were taught by Miss Bevan and Miss Myerson respectively. I knew them both slightly outside school, as they were customers of the Health Food Shop in Wellfield Road, which then belonged to two of my aunts. Outside school, Miss Bevan was involved in animal welfare. She used to collect stray cats to be "put to sleep", which I'm afraid earned her the nickname "Pussy Bevan".

After Standard 1, because the School had been bombed, there was no more room for us in Marlborough Road and we were sent either to Roath Park or Albany Road for Standard 2. I went to Roath Park, where we were segregated into Boys (upstairs) and Girls (downstairs), with separate playgrounds and even separate entrances. The boys had all male teachers (who also seemed elderly) and the girls all female.



### **The school building.**

The Head's room was exactly where it is today and the outside of that end of the building was very much as it still is, red brick with big windows, too high to see out of. The window frames, which were wooden, have probably been replaced now but you don't notice that. The entrance from Blenheim Road was in the same place, but then it had a big solid wooden door, like the door to a church. There was a porch inside the door and, facing you as you went in, another wooden door leading out into the playground. To your left was the corridor leading to the hall. To your right was a blank wall.

In the hall for Assembly, we faced towards the playground. The platform where the Head stood and the piano were by that wall. The wall behind us could be slid back on runners to make the hall bigger. It was varnished wood at the bottom. At the top, where you now have a long notice board with pupils' work on it, were glass panes going right up to the ceiling. These panes were completely covered on both sides with gauze. Shortly before I left, the gauze was peeled off leaving the glass very smeary with glue. You could then see through the glass and the teacher in that room wanted to have cupboards moved so that the class wouldn't be distracted by people in the hall being able to look in.

When you start school, I suppose, you take for granted that the way things are is natural. the way they've always been. We were allowed to believe that and didn't realise that we were living in unnatural times. Of course the bombing was the reason for the gauze on the windows in the hall. I didn't know this at the time, but was looking at the notice board last year. It occurred to me that the gauze was there to prevent shattered glass flying about in the event of a bomb (like the sticky paper on shop windows in the TV series 'Dad's Army and 'Goodnight Sweetheart'). Someone must have had to think of the effect that could have on a hall full of kids.

Apart from Assembly every day, the hall was used for several things. The under-fives used to have their cod liver oil and orange juice there; school dinners were served there (since we lived near the school and my Mum was at home, I didn't stay in to school dinners, but the smell of them hung about the hall all afternoon); the hall was decorated for parties at Christmas and for various other celebrations - St David's Day of course, but also Empire Day Also, I think we observed Ascension Day and the two minute silence on Armistice Day.

The playground was also much as it is now, except for three things:

**The outside toilets;** if you stand in the square part of the playground, with all the school behind you, the girls' toilets were about halfway down the wall to your right (far enough to get soaked crossing the yard if it was raining). The boys' toilets were right across the playground, where you have a little garden now. Both were nasty and smelly and, if possible, you waited until you went home!

**The air raid shelters;** oblong brick buildings, built underneath slate roofs, which are still there. By the time I started school air raids weren't taking place in the daytime, so we never used the shelters for real. They only came into use for practice alerts, when we had to leave the school as quickly as possible, and go over to sit in the shelters, until a teacher checked on the register that we were all

there. I think people who were in school earlier in the war had to carry their gas masks to school and keep them with them all the time. By 1943 they must have decided that nobody was using gas attacks so this custom was disbanded.

**The fence;** which must have been over 7 foot high went across the narrow part of the yard, about where your monkey-line is now. It was there to separate our playground from the bombsite where the rest of the school used to be.

### **The bomb site.**

The greatest tragedy that befell the school during the war was that the building was bombed in March 1941. By the time I started, the site (where the flat roofed part of the school is now) had been cleared and fenced right around. The only thing you could see over the fence was a tall chimney, which is still there. However, it was possible by standing on the low wall, which is still there, to climb over the wire work fence at the Marlborough Road end of the site. We were frequently warned not to go onto the bomb site as there was a lot of rubble and broken glass there, all overgrown with weeds and Buddleia bushes. I remember one teacher bringing this into a lesson about the meaning of the more difficult words in the Lord's Prayer. "And remember it's **trespassing** to go onto that bombsite!"

During my last year, American soldiers had a camp on the bombsite. They lived in enormous tents and had jeeps and trucks with them. It may have been a transit camp for soldiers coming to Europe or returning home. We were warned not to speak to these soldiers and especially not to say, "Got any gum chum?" (This was a sort of catch phrase, off the radio, but teachers saw it as begging for sweets, which were not rationed in the U.S.A.)

### **And finally..."**

I had the chance during 1997/8 to visit the school, when I took part in the Roath Village Web project as a CyberGran; I was most interested to see how the facilities had improved. We didn't have a library and the most advanced electronic equipment was a large free-standing radiogram (a sort of radio/record player) in the hall, on which we sometimes heard and exercised to BBC Schools programmes, like Music and Movement.

It was an experience to come back and revisit a place that had contributed so much to my development during my formative years. It was a chance to rekindle memories and see how pupils and their education have changed. I think today's pupils are more confident than we were and they appeared to be very sensible and interested in what we were saying.

Good Luck for the 100 Years!

### **Written by:-**

Margaret Reeves (Pupil at Marlborough Road Infants School 1943-46).

## **Memories of Marlborough by The Reverend Canon Roger Royle.**

May I wish the present staff and pupils all the very best as they celebrate the centenary of one of the very best junior schools in the United Kingdom although I must admit, I didn't think that when I was a pupil. In fact I hated going to school and it was only after some bribery that I went to school at all. I think it was Miss Newberry who said that if I went to school for a whole week without crying, she would give me a basket of fruit. I did manage to do it and from then on I was a very happy pupil indeed. In that basket of fruit was the first banana I had ever seen, let alone tasted.

While my brother Peter was in the Infants' school, the Junior school was bombed. When the site was cleared it was used as a camp for the American GI's who very kindly used to give us chewing gum although they were not supposed to. There was a brick chimney that was left standing and steps, which led down to the boiler room. However, with the heavy rains the boiler room often got flooded and the central heating was put out of action, so we were sent home early.

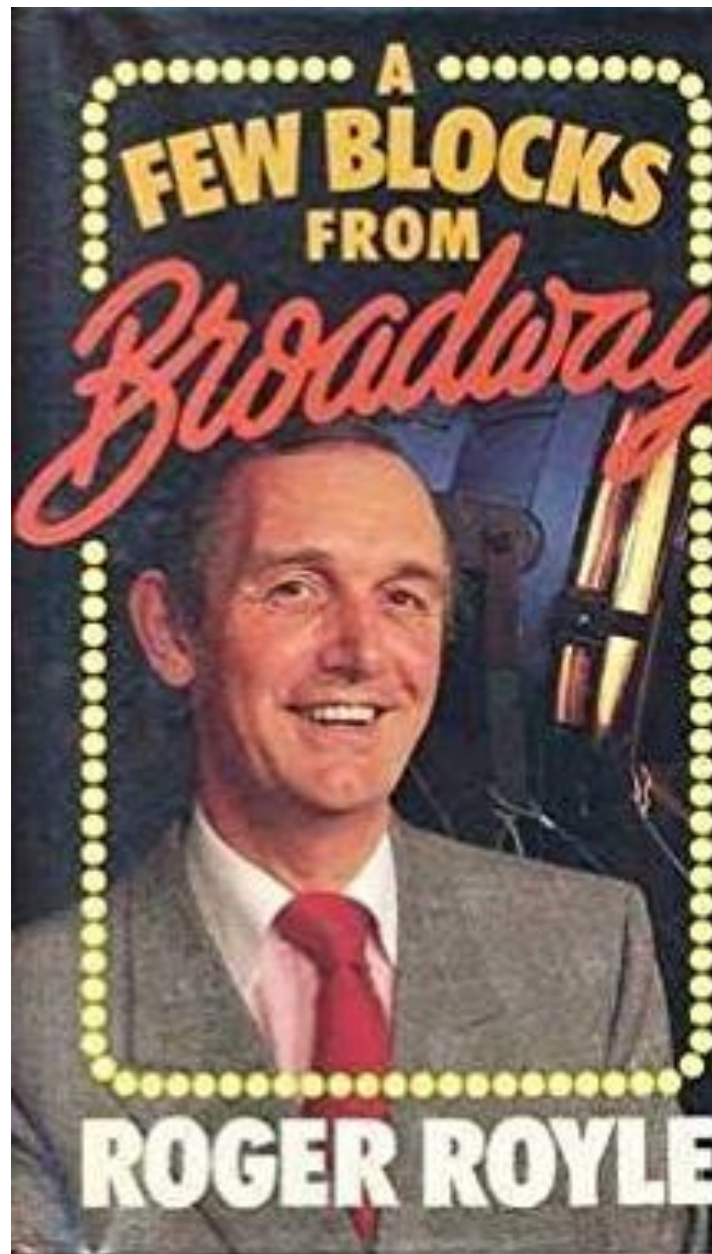
My best friend at school was someone I am still very much in touch with. Pat lived opposite me and although we were given 1d for our bus fare, we used to walk to school so that we could use the 1d to buy penny apples at Hutton's Fruiterers. Mrs Hutton was always very kind to us but we didn't get on so well with Mr Hutton. Well he wouldn't sell us penny apples. We saved our money until we had enough to buy a bottle of pop in Chandler's, which was the shop opposite. Then we shook it hard to see what would happen- it exploded!

On two occasions I was allowed to represent the school, once with Pat, once on my own. With Pat, I went to present a purse to the Lord Mayor. It was money the school had collected for some charity or other. On my own I represented the school when I was part of the choir that sang round Cardiff's first Civic Christmas tree.

From Marlborough Road - as it was called then - I went to Roath Park. My stay there was short and far from successful. I shall always be grateful to Marlborough Road. The dedicated staff set in place educational foundations on which I have been able to build the rest of my life. I am also grateful for the happy and caring atmosphere in which this was done. Thank God, Key Stages, SATs and Ofsted didn't exist!

With Every Good Wish for your centenary celebrations,

Roger Royle.



Cover from one of Roger Royle's Books

30/11/99

Dear Mr Evans,

Thank you for your letter dated 29.11.99, telling me about the school's Millennium/Centenary celebrations, and asking for memories that I might have.

At the time of attending Marlborough Road, as it was referred to then, I was living in Ty Draw Road, and I remember being taken to school by my Father and riding on the crossbar of his bicycle! I also remember the shelters/bicycle sheds/storerooms at the end of the playground! I recall the name of a fellow pupil; Kay Evans, but my most vivid memory is learning a poem in Welsh.

"Dau aderyn bach. yn eistedd ar y wal"

one named Peter, one named Paul,

Fly away Peter, fly away Paul etc.....!

Later when preparing to study for my P.G.C.E. in Art at London University's Institute of Education, I was required to do a teaching practice and I chose to spend time in Marlborough Road School again. I really enjoyed that time as well and have a vivid memory of my introduction to teaching art, something I have done for most of my life, although nowadays I "do it" through the medium of television to a larger (and more mixed) 'class'!

I chose to guide the children through a mask-making project. They all made papier mache masks and painted them. One child painted his with 98% black paint and 2% yellow, around the eyes. On studying my new books for my course in the Institute I discovered that this continuation and percentage indicated big trouble! I seem to remember Jean Piaget and/or Victor Lowenfeld saying "that any child producing these colours, in these proportions under "free" conditions was on the verge or in a nervous breakdown" and should be taken seriously as a matter of urgency. As a 'good' student teacher I took my findings to the Head teacher and was told that indeed the particular pupil in question was in serious physiological trauma and was being counselled etc. After this episode I took colour theory very seriously!

I would love to be part of your celebrations either by attending an event and/or making something as a lasting tribute.

Can I get in touch with you by 'phone next time I plan to be in Cardiff?

Yours sincerely,

David Petersen

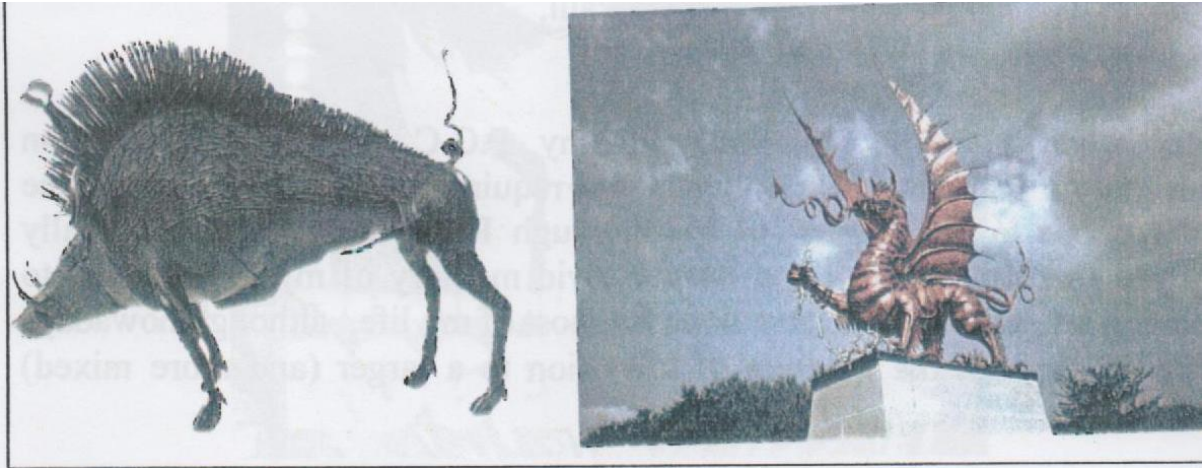
(D.O.B. 25.02.44.)!

I enclose some postcards of work that I do, so that you can see the kind of sculpture that I'm involved in.

Letter written by:-

David Petersen. (Former pupil and Sculptor at Petersen Studios, now residing in Saint Clears, West Wales.)





Two examples of David Petersen's work. Y Twrch Trwyth and The Mametz Wood Memorial to the 38<sup>th</sup> Welsh Division in Mametz, Somme France.

## **MEMORIES OF MARLBOROUGH.**

I attended Marlborough Juniors in the late 1950s/early 60's. My name was then Gillian Davies and I lived in Colchester Avenue, as did many of my school friends.



Photograph of Gillian Davies Taken In Marlborough School in about 1960

My teacher in Standard 1 (Year 3) was Miss Lloyd. To me she seemed very glamorous, with high stiletto heels and very tight skirts. She had blonde hair and very red lipstick and I was rather in awe of her.

My teacher in Standard 2 was Mr Evans or "Danno" as we used to call him. His name was Dan O Evans! We never found out what the 'O' stood for! He was a small stocky, very Welsh man, whom everybody loved. He always had a big smile on his face and I can not remember him being angry with anyone. Everyone was very sorry to leave his class at the end of the year and there were many tears, particularly amongst the girls.

In Standard 3 was Mr McCarthy. He seemed very old and was tall and thin. He didn't smile very much and was a complete contrast to "Danno".

My final teacher was Mr Thomas, who was very stern, but an excellent teacher. At the time we had to do exams at the end of Junior School called the 11-plus and he taught us all very well. We used to chant our tables until we knew every one and do lots of English Grammar and Mental Arithmetic. He sometimes used to talk about the "Bally War", and one of his favourite sayings was "No names, no pack drill".

Apart from Mr Evans, my favourite teacher was Mr Meredith, who taught Welsh. I was very fortunate in that I could read Welsh very well (although I didn't understand it!) and everyone used to call me his "pet". He was very tall (or so it seemed to me) and very gentle. Due to him, Welsh was my favourite subject, but I wasn't able to carry on taking it in the Grammar School which was a great disappointment to him.

I don't remember the Headteacher very well but I think his name was Mr Evans (not the current one, of course!). I think he had a white moustache but that is all I can recollect.

The toilets were outside the school and we had to run out in all weather if we needed to use the loo!

I remember the "new block" being built and we thought it was wonderful it was so modern! We used to go on to the first floor for History and sewing, but apart from that we didn't spend much time there. All our other lessons, apart from P.E. were in our own classrooms.

These were quite dull places compared to today's classrooms. Every class had a big map of the world on the wall, which was mostly pink. as this showed which countries belonged to Britain.

Our Sports Days were held at Maindy Stadium and we were all transported by double-decker buses for these. I hated Sports Days as I could not run fast and never won any prizes.

My days at Marlborough Road were very happy. The teachers were excellent and I'm sure I couldn't have had a better start in life.

I know that the present day school is carrying on the good work started back in 1900 and my own son has started Year 3 in September 1999. I look forward to maintaining my close associations with the school for many years to come.

Account written by:-

Gill Jackson.

## **The Roath Village Web**

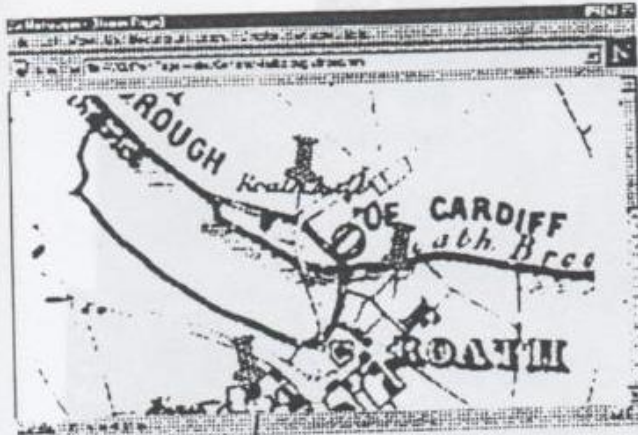
This section is dedicated to the cross curricular work undertaken by the school last year. It embraced the areas of Information Technology, English, History, Geography and Art. With the help of Sue Williams from Hyperaction the school undertook a project researching the area of Roath and its rich history. The quality of the material produced in collaboration with Albany Primary our neighbours, was of such a high standard that it won the 1999 Welsh Heritage Initiative prize for Primary Schools. Indeed this was a great honour.

The project involved the children in researching the area surrounding the school which is steeped in history. To record their findings in a new and different way was a challenge. However, Sue Williams (herself a former pupil) helped the children to record their findings using Information Technology to create a Web site to be shared with others. The project was designed to be cross generational using former pupils and elderly members of the community as a living resource. The elders contributed their knowledge of the neighbourhood through reminiscences and the children helped the elders understand how computers worked to record their stories.

The following pages give examples of the material that can be accessed by logging on to this address

<http://www.hyperaction.org.uk/RoathVillageWeb>

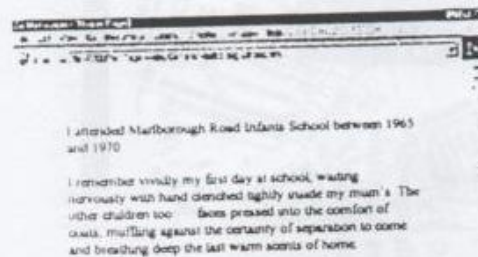
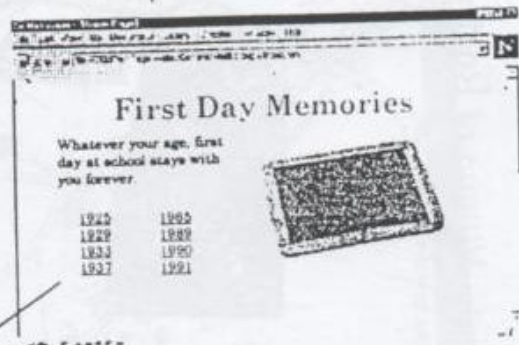
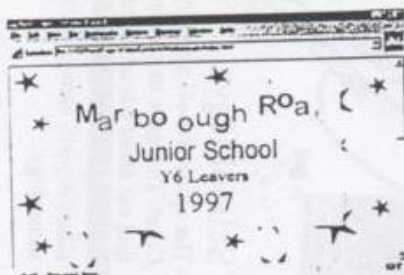
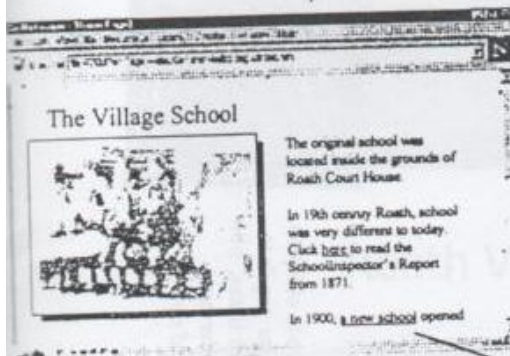
# Roath Village Web



The web site is constructed around maps of Roath. In this example, the map used is from 1867.

Key locations on the map have been made into 'hot spots'. Click on a hot spot and a link is made either to another page, map or image.

There will be five focus areas, each with a key theme. Here the school is used as an example of the web in action.



The potential to make connections between pages, images and ideas through hypertext links, or hyperlinks, means that the web site can consist of many layers and that ideas can be explored in many ways.



## Welcome to the Village of Roath...

The Home Page takes the form of a clickable map.

### Park Life

An opportunity to explore the natural environment within our city neighbourhood.



### The Blitz

Pupils interview elders about their experiences of living



### Food & Lifestyle

The mill stood in Waterloo Gardens and was demolished in the late 19th century. This part of the site focuses on the rural community of Roath and changing lifestyle.



### Roath People

Children and elders exchanged stories and experiences while taking each other's portrait photographs.



### School Days

The village school stood in the grounds of Roath Court. This gave us an opportunity for pupils to find out about education in Victorian times, how schooling has changed and to consider how schooling will change with the use of new technology.



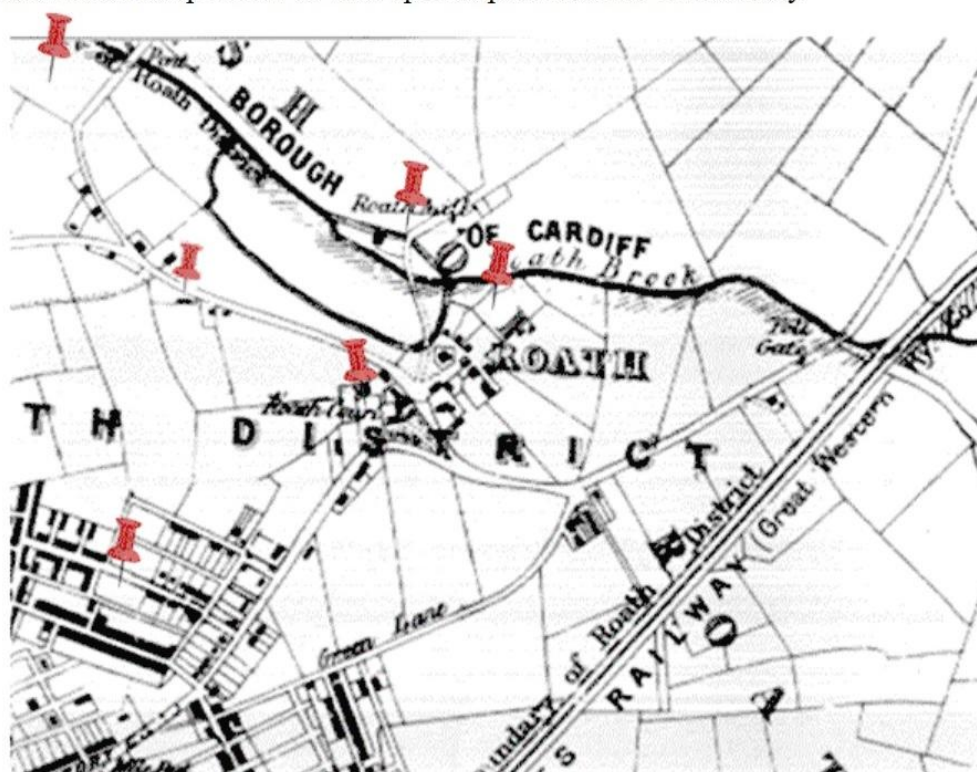
## The Cybergrannies



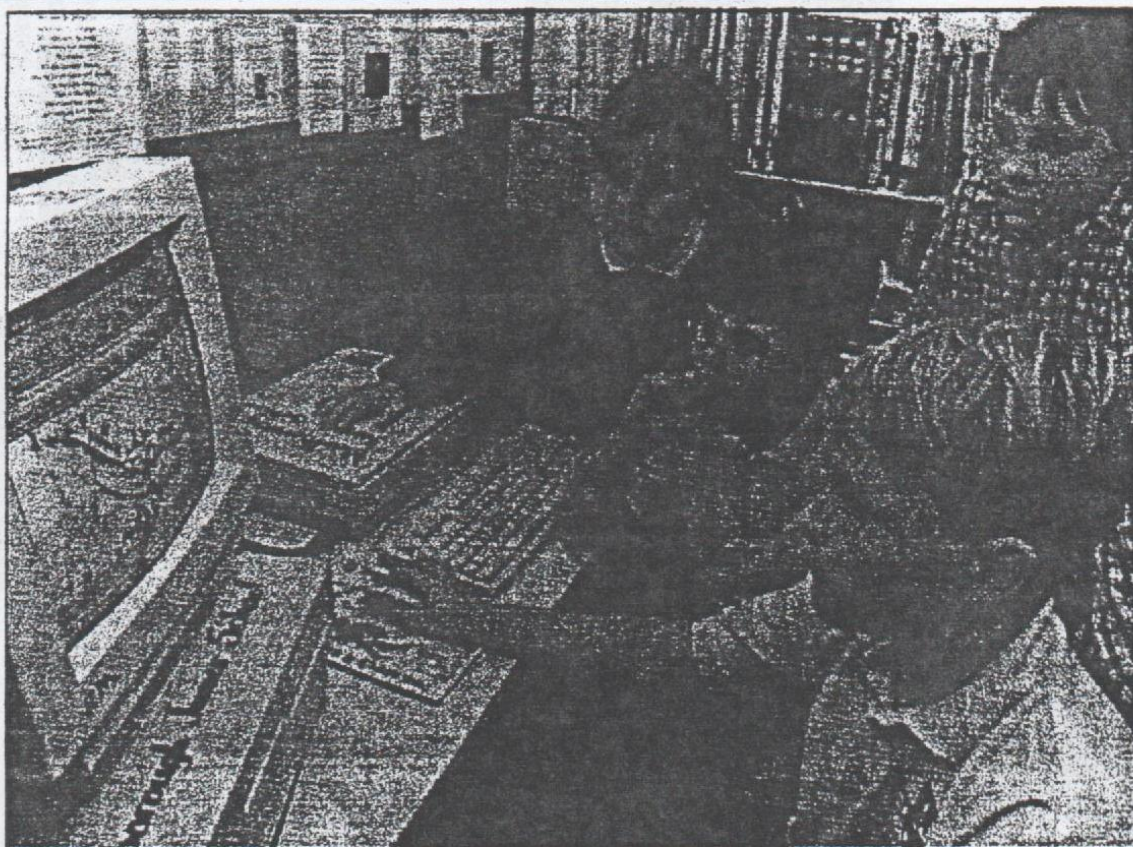
## Roath Village Web Cover Map

### Roath Village Web

Click on the map below to visit special places in our community.







► **COMMUNITY PROJECT** Marlborough Junior School pupils Lucy Small, James Downs, John Cornelli and Joseph Davies working on the web site. **PICTURE:** Andrew Davies

# Generations interact through Internet site

**PUPILS** and pensioners have been working hand in hand to create a picture of a part of Cardiff for the World Wide Web.

More than 100 Roath residents, aged from seven to 75, took part in the innovative project, which has seen the creation of a new parish map available on the Internet at the click of a button.

Pupils at Marlborough Junior School and Albany Road Primary School enlisted the help of older members of the community to put together a history of the area.

To mark the end of a year's work on the web, local councillor and Marlborough School governor Freda Salway will unveil a ceramic sculpture made by the children and Roath artist Jan

By Nick Machin

Beeny.

A special exhibition and cyber cafe will also be set up in the Marlborough school hall on Tuesday, March 16, so that parents, children and friends can visit the Roath Village Web Site for themselves.

The web site was the brainchild of former English teacher Sue Williams, who set up her own computer business HyperAction.

Sue, who was born and bred in Roath and went to Marlborough School, said:

"The site is not just a written history of Roath but also brings in drawings to recreate Roath visually.

"It's been a really exciting project. It involved a group of elders, or Cyber Grannies as

the children called them, many of whom had their first hands-on experience of computers."

"The amount of material the children and elders have produced has been phenomenal."

Marlborough School headteacher John Evans said the project had been a great experience for everyone.

He said: "It has really made history come alive for the children. It has also helped to break down some of the barriers between the generations."

The work will not stop there, as Marlborough School looks to add pages to the site when it commemorates its centenary next year.

The web site is on <http://www.hyperaction.org.uk/RoathVillageWeb/>

# Reminiscence Session One

**Venue:** Marlborough Junior School, Blenheim Road, Penylan, Cardiff.

**Date:** Tuesday, 2 June, 1998.

**Interviewers:** Hannah, Jessica, Joe and John.

**Interviewees:** Rita, Margaret, Sheila, Sylvia, Doris, Nancy, Joan and Judith.

**Tape recorded and transcribed by Carol Read.**

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## Were you frightened during the black-out?

- Rita** *There were no lights at all in the streets and no house lights. It was absolutely pitch black. and you had to take a torch which couldn't be very bright. It had to be shaded so you didn't have much light at all. It was very frightening.*
- Nancy** *I can remember that I'd just started work. I was about sixteen or seventeen and I worked in a big office in town. There were big panes attached to the windows with criss-cross tape covering them for the black-out and, one day, one of them fell on me!*
- Sylvia** *It was frightening in the black-out because it was very dark. There were no place names. They were all taken down. If you didn't know where you were or you weren't familiar with the area you were in, you could quite easily get lost.*

## Why were all the street names taken down?

- Doris** *In case of invasion. The Germans would have maps but couldn't follow them because there were no street names anywhere.*

## Did you think you were going to lose the war at any time?

- Chorus** *No! (Loudly and emphatically)*
- Margaret** *No, we really didn't.*
- Sylvia** *I think it was propaganda. We were led to believe that we were winning the war.*
- Margaret** *On the radio it wasn't like during the Gulf War where you had people talking about both sides and saying they've got this on their side. It was all about what we were doing and we were right!*
- Sylvia** *We were told how many German bombers were destroyed that night and how we were advancing.*
- Voice** *No, our losses weren't announced really.*
- Nancy** *We also had Lord Haw Haw who would tell us stories about how our men/troops were losing, which turned out to be quite untrue really but he was trying to convince us that we didn't have a chance of winning the war. The Germans were going to win, the Germans and their allies but, of course, he was proved wrong and he died for what he said during the war.*

## Who was Lord Haw Haw?

- Voice** *Lord Haw Haw's real name was William Joyce. He tried to break British morale by giving false information. He would announce the names of towns in Britain which he claimed had been badly bombed.*



### **Was the black-out very strict?**

- Voice** *Yes, definitely.*
- Rita** *You dare not show a chink of light, otherwise you would have the air raid warden knocking on your door, reminding you. You had to be very, very careful with curtains and have black curtains tightly drawn.*
- Doris** *You'd even be told to put a cigarette out. Just the glow of a cigarette burning and they'd say, "Put that cigarette out."*
- Carol** *Were air raid wardens patrolling all the time then?*
- Sylvia** *They were on duty on a rota basis usually in someone's house.*
- Nancy** *There was a basement in the office building where I worked and everyone knew that one room was made out as a base for the air raid warden with a bunk bed etc. and you knew that someone would always be there.*
- Sylvia** *There were also bases in community centres and church halls.*
- Rita** *There were usually two or three air raid wardens on duty at any one time.*

### **What was your worst or best memory?**

- Margaret** *I can remember when we used to stay with my grandparents and my aunts who had a shop in Wellfield Road. My grandparents didn't have a shelter in their back garden because they didn't believe in them. It was like the Nuclear Free Zones. They were pacifists. They didn't believe in the War, so they weren't going to have a shelter. When we stayed with them, my mother would have to get us up, my little brother and me, and get us to a shelter. This meant we had to get up and get dressed, go down Wellfield Road and Albany Road, down into the shelter on the corner of Alfred Street. It used to be Thomas's, the florist's. I think it's empty now. They had a special, big cellar underneath that used to be for those who didn't have anywhere else to go. There used to be a warden there and he would have a list of people to look out for before he closed the door. I can remember running down Wellfield Road with my brother, who was a baby in a pushchair. We were going to the shelter in the blackout.*

### **Was that your worst memory then, Margaret?**

- Margaret** *Yes, I think so.*
- Joan** *I have some very vivid memories of the war. I'll talk about one of them. I was working in the Channel Dry Dock offices. I was working for the Admiralty and we had high, sloping desks and long, tall chairs. We were in a large room with six desks at one side and six at the other and very large windows. This happened to be at the time when France capitulated. That means that the Germans had invaded their country and they gave in. Unknown to the people in this country then, at that precise time, they had taken over the French planes. The French were our Allies and they used to identify the planes by the markings on them. They didn't put on the siren, if the planes were our allies, only if it was the enemy. It was three o'clock on a Wednesday afternoon. I'll never forget it. We were sitting at our desks working away. Actually, we were busy doing the Admiralty charts mapping minefields and wrecks in the sea. We heard a plane. At the desk behind me, there was a young man who had previously had a horrific accident and had lost one of his legs. He had not yet got an artificial limb. He was sitting behind me and he was also a joker. He actually said \_\_\_\_\_ (makes the sound of an air raid siren). All of a sudden, we heard a terrific explosion. We wondered what had happened. Actually, the gentleman with only one leg had got out of that room first. He hopped from desk to desk,*



*until he got outside and the first we knew he was out there was when he called out,*

*"Will somebody bring my crutch?"*

*That was the amazing part of it. That day we heard that a ship in the Channel Dry Dock had been hit. A bomb had gone through the hold and killed seven men. We were in the Channel Dock offices. We were not the distance of this room away from it. It was a terrific memory.*

Joan

*There was another memory. To get to the Channel Dry Dock offices, you had to cross three docks. Whenever there was an air raid, the gates in the docks would swing back so that, if you were outside the dock, you couldn't get on and, if you were inside the dock, you couldn't get out. There was a roadway used by transportation and that used to swing from side to side. When the air raid warning sounded, it was swung that way so there was no way of getting out. A little way down, about fifty yards down, there was a pedestrian roadway and that used to come across the dock like this, (demonstrated with hands at this point) and those gates were opened like that. When the siren went off, one would swing this way and one would swing that way. I was caught on the dock with my fiancé - we worked together. (In those days we used to work from eight in the morning till eight at night because we were so busy turning out these charts.) When we reached the last dock, the roadway had already swung. My fiancé said to me,*

*"We'll make for the other one."*

*As we were getting near it, the gates were parting in the middle. He said,*

*"Can you jump?"*

*I said, "I think so."*

*I jumped and I only hoped he had managed to jump behind me and he did! We married eventually. There you are. That's another memory of the War.*

Sylvia

*We didn't have an air raid shelter all the time and, if we thought there was going to be an air raid that night, we would walk to my auntie's who lived in Maindy Road, which was in Cathays. This particular night, we went to my auntie's. We passed a house in Wyverne Road and the lady standing on the gate said to my mother,*

*"Oh, we are so delighted because we've had a real Anderson shelter put in today so we'll be O.K. if there's an air raid tonight."*

*That night there was a dreadful air raid and we felt the blast in my auntie's house. We came back the next morning past that house and the houses along there had all been demolished. They'd had a direct hit on that air raid shelter and she and all her children - I think it was about six or seven children - were killed in one night. The whole family was killed and they'd only had the air raid shelter the day before.*

Carol

*I've read about that family in the Western Mail book*

Doris

*We didn't have a shelter. We lived in City Road and I worked in Cardiff High School. Every night we used to go down to Cardiff High School to the*

*shelter in the basement that was used as a shelter for the public. We'd go in there and we'd take food, Oxos and things like that, and there was a really good spirit down there. We'd laugh and sing and tell stories. If you didn't have your Oxo, they'd say,*

*"Oh, we've got an Oxo. You can have this."*

*At six o'clock in the morning the All Clear would go. Then you'd walk home, go to bed for an hour, then get up for work.*

**Sylvia** *Children didn't have very much sleep during the War, as far as I can remember. We all learned to dress very quickly when the warning siren woke us.*

**Doris** *Then later we had an indoor shelter and we hung our stockings up on it on Christmas Eve for Father Christmas to come.*

**Carol** *And did he ?*

**Doris** *Yes, he did come. He found his way into the air raid shelter.*

**Rita** *We didn't really enjoy going down into the air raid shelter. It was damp and dark, so we used paraffin lamps. Whenever I smell paraffin, it reminds me of going down into the shelter. We had our neighbours from next door as well. We used to share with them and we had no room to move. It wasn't very pleasant. I wasn't particularly fond of the shelter. There were eight of us altogether. We had bunks, hoping we were going to get some sleep but it didn't work out. There were too many of us.*

**Carol** *Where was that?*

**Rita** *In Southminster Road, where we lived then.*

**Doris** *There were big shelters in the roads and people caught out in town or in the street could go into these shelters.*

**Nancy** *I remember going to the Gaiety Cinema and, because I enjoyed the film so much, I stayed there to see it round again. When we came out, it was dark and there was an air raid, so we went into the big shelter by the Gaiety Cinema. As the shelter seemed to be a bit crowded, I thought I'd run home quickly because my father wouldn't be very pleased. I got half way down Glenroy Street. Then there was a lot of noise: aeroplanes and shrapnel coming down, bits of metal falling. I got rather scared, so I knocked on someone's door in Glenroy Street and they let me go inside. I stayed for a while. When I came out, I started running down Glenroy Street because I lived in Claude Place. Along came my father, looking for me. He was not very pleased.*

*"Where have you been? You should have been home hours ago!"*

*I was frightened, I can tell you.*

**Sylvia** *Nancy's talking about shrapnel falling. That was one of the things we did as children, walk along the streets looking for bits of bombs or anything that might have fallen off a German plane. There was great competition in the schools to see who had the biggest piece of shrapnel or who had something with German words written on it. We played different games in those days.*

**Did you ever see German planes or planes fighting each other?**

**Voices** *No.*

**Doris** *Most of the fighting was over on the Eastern side of the country.*

**Sylvia** *You would see a German plane if it was caught in the searchlights. Do you know about the searchlights? We used to have soldiers manning searchlights and they would sweep across the sky in the hope of seeing a German plane. Then the guns would try and shoot it down. If you saw a plane in the searchlights, you wouldn't stay around.*

**Doris** *They were quite effective, weren't they?*

**Caol** *Where were they positioned?*

**Sylvia** *Anywhere, as long as there was an open space.*

**Doris** *The recreation ground.*

**Sylvia/Nancy** *It was frightening because if there was fire and smoke, you wouldn't want to be caught in the searchlight. You'd have searchlights in all directions.*

**Rita** *Oh yes. They'd be criss-crossing each other.*

**Sylvia** *There would also be barrage balloons.*

**Margaret** *They were like great, grey balloons up in the sky and I remember I called them Dumbos! They were up on the hill near where the Howardian Centre is now and the concrete bases were there for a long time afterwards. I think the idea was that, if planes flew too low, they would get caught up in the wires which secured the balloons to the ground.*

**Rita** *I think there was one on the recreation ground, wasn't there?*

**Chorus** *Yes, there was.*

**Margaret** *They were all around Cardiff.*

**Sylvia** *At one stage, the wires were broken and a barrage balloon came down on a house in Keppoch Street and the whole house was completely covered by it. Of course, in that house everyone was very frightened not knowing what had happened. After the 'All Clear' had sounded, crowds went to look.*

### **Were most bombings during the night or day?**

**Nancy** *There were more raids at night. It was very frightening really because you'd be asleep and you'd hear the wailing noise of the siren. We all had to get up, put on our dressing gowns, socks, shoes and things and go down to the shelter, where we'd wait until the raid was over. Occasionally, we felt we wouldn't go out into the garden to get into our Anderson shelter. We'd just get under the stairs instead. In our front room we had a billiard table and sometimes we'd all get under that.*

**Voice** *he raid I'm talking about was in the middle of the afternoon. We did have some of those in June 1940.*

### **Did you ever see a plane that had crashed or been shot down?**

**Sylvia** *We once saw a German aeroplane or part of a plane that had been shot down and was on show outside the Museum or City Hall. Anyone could go along to see it. It was a morale booster - to make us all feel better, seeing one German plane less. Money was collected in aid of the war effort.*

### **Were there any scares or rumours about spies in or around Cardiff?**

**Rita** *There were always rumours. I remember we were told, "Careless talk costs lives." (Everyone joined in with this.) You were warned not to speak carelessly about anything because you didn't know who might be listening.*

**Nancy** *I think something came up about somebody who lived in Claude Road or Connaught Road, who was later found to be a spy. I can't remember any more details. Of course, I lived in Claude Place, so a spy in Claude Road*

*was really something!*

### **Were people scared of spies being around?**

**Sylvia** *There were posters around to remind you. You were careful what you said. If someone was married to a soldier, then you wouldn't really say that he'd just gone back to camp in order to go down to the South coast because, if there was a spy, he might pick up that there was going to be an invasion of a country.*

**Voice** *Posters were about all over.*

**Sylvia** *Doris and I went on a cycling trip to Newport and we got as far as Marshfield. An American convoy was parked all along the route. We were asked for our identification cards, which we had to carry all the time because we were at war. A soldier said, "You have no business to be here." We guessed then that they were obviously preparing for the invasion.*

**Doris** *It was just before invasion day. We'd got half way to Newport and stumbled into the convoy. I think they did it for a laugh more than anything else, as we were quite young.*

**Voice** *Was it an excuse to chat you up?*

**Sylvia** *Well yes, possibly.*

**Joan** *I remember one day I was at the window with the baby when some American soldiers came by. I lived in Marlborough Road at the time. They pulled up and beckoned to me, so I went out carrying my baby. One soldier gave me a large tin of peaches from his rations. It was very welcome. That was the nearest I got to seeing a convoy. There were about five or six of them, I think.*

### **Did you have lessons in the air raid shelters?**

**Margaret** *I started school later in the War in about 1943 and, at that time, there weren't raids during the day, only at night. But we had practice shelter drills, where the bell would go and you'd all have to get over to the shelters and sit down while the teachers called the register and made sure everyone was inside. But, as I say, there weren't raids during the day time.*

**Sylvia** *We didn't have lessons in the air raid shelters but the teacher would tell us stories or we would sing songs or have guessing games. They kept us occupied, so we wouldn't be thinking about the air raids.*

### **Did you have to take your gas masks to school**

**Nancy** *Yes. I used to go to the High School off City Road and we had to take our gas masks. We had them on a strap over our shoulder. It was like a cardboard box and, if you forgot it, you had to go home to fetch it because they thought that we might have a gas attack which we never did.*

**Sylvia** *You would never go anywhere without your gas mask because an air raid warden would stop you and say, "Where's your gas mask?" and you'd have to say, "Look, I've got it here." It was no use saying you'd left it at home.*

**Doris** *You'd have to have it with you there and then.*

**Carol** *What was it like to wear a gas mask?*

**Sylvia** *Well, they smelled of rubber.*

**Doris** *They had a nasty smell and made a funny noise when you breathed.*

**Sylvia** *We used to have gas mask practice in class. We had to sit with our gas masks on during lessons. There were always some naughty ones - I'm not*

*saying I was one of them - but, if you breathed incorrectly, they made a rude noise, so we all used to be doing this and the whole class ended up making this noise in their gas masks.*

**Did you ever have games or P.E.?**

**Nancy** *I can remember that we used to have games during the War and we didn't have a playing field of our own so we used to go down to the Harlequins. Do you know where that is? Or in the playground we'd play netball.*

**Doris** *We went to Western Avenue for our hockey field.*

**Rita** *I can remember going into the gym.*

**How many children were in the school?**

**Voice** *I don't really know. In Marlborough Road the boys were upstairs and the girls were downstairs.*

**Margaret** *I was in the school after it had been bombed. When you were eight, you went to Roath Park. Now I don't know how many children were in the school, but I know there were forty-eight in our class because the kids from Marlborough Road were coming into Roath Park as well you see and the lessons still seemed to work. There were two classes for each year. Class sizes were probably down to thirty once I got to High School.*

**How many air raid shelters did you have in the playground?**

**Doris/Sylvia** *In the High School we went down into the basement but in Howard Gardens we just went into the open space under one block of buildings. It wasn't a shelter as such. It was a covered playground. There were classrooms above it and it was where we would play if it was wet.*

**Rita** *When we were doing our exams, there was an air raid and we had to go down the back stairs. We weren't allowed to go outside.*

**Margaret** *Here at Marlborough I think there was just the one ribcage shelter - a long one - and it had another roof over the top of it. They had a similar arrangement at Roath Park School and someone said it used to be the bike sheds.*

**Margaret** *There were wooden forms for seats inside.*

**What do you think of the school now?**

**Margaret** *I like this library. We didn't have anything like it.*

**Nancy** *It's all very different from what I can remember. The hall seemed to be enormous to me. The boys and girls would be in separate classrooms. We didn't sit at round tables but in rows. There was a lot of brown paint, so it didn't look too cheerful. I think it's much nicer now.*

**Margaret** *In the hall the classroom wall which now has big noticeboards with posters and people's work on it used to be a nasty shade of brown paint at the bottom and then glass from about three feet up right up to the ceiling. During the War the glass was totally covered in gauze (like bandages). Until I came back this time, I had forgotten about it. I remember after the War, when I was here in 1945 or 1946, coming back from holiday one time and all the gauze had been taken off the windows, so you could see into the classrooms. The teachers promptly started moving cupboards to stop people walking past from looking into their classrooms. But, of course, the reason why that gauze had been there was because, if a bomb dropped outside, the blast was very dangerous. It would have broken all that glass and thrown it*



*into the hall. Somebody must have had to think of that and put up the gauze.  
It's horrible to think about now, isn't it?*

### **Do you have any memories of school life during the War?**

- Sylvia** *We used to knit balaclavas for seamen and socks for British soldiers during lesson time. We used to put our name and a short message inside them, "Good luck in the War," or something similar.*
- Carol** *Knitting socks must have been difficult.*
- Sylvia** *Oh socks - yes, it was horrible knitting on four needles. It really was a nightmare for me.*
- Voices** *General agreement and laughter.*
- Doris** *I remember going to Whitchurch Hospital to visit the soldiers who had been wounded. The fifth form was asked to visit. We did a lot of knitting for them. I loved knitting and would often take my knitting down into the air raid shelter.*
- Carol** *Was it not too dark to knit in the shelter?*
- Doris** *Well, no, because we went into the High School shelter.*
- Voice** *We probably did drop stitches in the dark.*

### **What sort of lessons did you have?**

- Rita** *I can remember having nature lessons. We used to go out into the park sometimes and pick up the leaves. Then we had to say what sort of a tree they came from. We also did a lot of reading and arithmetic. I remember there were maps all over the walls, so we must have had geography as well.*
- Margaret** *We had Scripture. That would be R.I. now, wouldn't it?*

### **Did you have school dinners?**

- Margaret** *I think that school dinners only started during the War, so that mothers could go out to work because the men were away. When I was in Roath Park, I used to stay to dinners. That would be after the War in 1946. Because dinners hadn't been served in school before the War, we had to go to the building on the Rec. that is now Penylan Library. That was our dinner hall.*
- Sylvia** *During the War dinners were also served in the church at the end of Albany Road.*

### **Was the food better quality during or after the War?**

- Doris** *Well, it was healthier then because we didn't have sugar or cream. We just had basic foods.*
- Sylvia** *We had lots of fresh vegetables and very few sweets because they were on ration. There was very little meat, not a lot of fruit - no oranges or bananas - but we did have apples. There was no white bread, it was dark bread. People called it black bread, but it wasn't really black.*
- Doris** *It was dirty white.*
- Sylvia** *We had to queue for food. Bread was two pence a loaf. We were allowed one egg a week and then, joy of joys, the Americans produced Spam and everyone lived on it. Spam was a kind of chopped ham in a tin from America. We thought it was quite tasty.*
- Voice** *We still love Spam.*
- Tape ends at this point with a chorus of voices praising Spam!**

## Reminiscence Session Two

**Venue:** Marlborough Junior School, Blenheim Road, Penylan, Cardiff.

**Date:** Tuesday, 2 June, 1998.

**Interviewers:** Bethan, Richard, Robin and Tasmin.

**Interviewees:** Rita, Margaret, Sheila, Sylvia, Doris, Nancy, Joan and Judith.

**Tape recorded and transcribed by Carol Read**

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### How did you feel about rationing?

**Rita** *Well, it was a pretty miserable business altogether. They say we were healthier but it didn't seem as if we had enough to eat most of the time. People had to grow their own vegetables and the rations were so small. There were so many things that we couldn't have at all, like oranges and bananas. There weren't many sweets. Food wasn't very interesting. We only had one egg a week each, the rest was dried egg which wasn't all that pleasant. There was a very small amount of butter, but mostly we ate margarine. Sugar was rationed.*

**Doris** *So was bacon, jam and bread.*

**Rita** *Yes, almost everything was rationed. We didn't have a very interesting diet, not like you have nowadays.*

**Doris** *We did have fish and chips!*

**Sylvia** *Of course, clothes were rationed and you had to have coupons to buy them. If you wanted a pair of shoes, you'd need five coupons. Skirts were on coupons but hats weren't. Even material was on coupons.*

**Doris** *Knitting wool was on coupons.*

**Rita** *People used to make clothes for children out of grown-ups' clothes.*

**Sylvia** *And blankets! I had a dressing gown made out of a blanket. Dresses were made from curtain material. I had lovely curtain dresses!*

*Laughter*

**Margaret** *And parachute silk.*

*Laughter*

**Doris** *Yes, I had nighties made from parachute silk.*

*General agreement*

### How did rationing actually work?

**Rita** *You had a ration book with coupons in and you had to register with a supplier*

*for the basic goods. For the rest, you just had to queue. When you heard that a shop had some tinned fruit in, there would be a long queue down the street. First come, first served.*

**Doris** *You'd get on the end of any queue because there was bound to be something you wanted.*

**Sylvia** *But when you bought half a pound of butter or half a pound of bacon, the shop assistant would tear the appropriate coupon out of your book.*

**Doris** *To know you'd had your ration for the week.*

**Sylvia** *You couldn't have twice that amount.*

**Carol** *So when you'd used up all your coupons?*

**Sylvia** *That was it!*

**Doris** *You'd go without!*

**Margaret** *My great-uncle and aunt had a fruit shop in Albany Road. Fruit like oranges that came from abroad was always very scarce. Fruit that grew in this country like apples wasn't a problem. You didn't see bananas at all, but oranges from somewhere like Spain were available occasionally. If you had a green ration book, which meant there was a child in the family, they'd mark off when you'd had the oranges. Apparently, my Uncle Bill in Albany Road would give oranges to people with green ration books and not mark them off. He'd say,*

*"You go down to the next fruit shop and get some more."*

*But that didn't work with ordinary coupons because they had to be taken out of the book.*

**Sylvia** *Of course, there was the Black Market. People would buy coupons for money. If you were poor, you could sell your coupons to dealers who would sell them on to people who could afford to pay quite high prices for coupons so that they could have more clothes. There was quite a Black Market.*

**Doris** *There was a Black Market in all things, including food.*

### **What was rationed the most? What did you get the least of?**

**Rita** *Oranges and bananas. They weren't actually rationed. They just weren't around. All the basics - butter, eggs, bacon, meat, sugar - were all rationed so everybody had something, but not much.*

**Margaret** *That was the idea, wasn't it? To share out what there was.*

*How long did your ration book last you? You couldn't have coupons for five years inside the ration book.*

**Rita** *They would be renewed every year.*

**Sylvia** *Every year or every six months?*

**Nancy** *I don't remember. My mother was doing the housekeeping then.*

**Margaret** *I think I've got one with a date on like 1944-5 or something like that. Perhaps it was like a school year.*

**Sylvia** *It was probably six months or a year because they'd have the month inside. I remember that now.*

**Doris** *The date would be on the coupon, so you couldn't use next week's coupon this week.*

**Margaret** *It was like a pension book.*

*Was rationing fair?*

**Doris** *Yes, otherwise people who could pay a lot of money would have had much more.*

*Were sweets rationed as well?*

**Sylvia** *Sweets were rationed.*

**Nancy** *I think the ration was about two ounces a week.*

**Sylvia** *I remember just after the War when sweets were still rationed. I had a boy friend who didn't realise that he actually had a sweet ration until I said,*

*"This is my sweet ration. Where's yours?"*

*Laughter*

**Sylvia** *His mother had his sweet ration, so he went home one day and said, "Mum, where's my sweet ration?" She had to give it up because he had a girl friend.*

**Rationing went on after the War, didn't it? Can you remember anything about that, Sheila?**

**Sheila** *The only thing I remember was that I didn't have a teddy bear until I was twenty one.*

**Chorus** *Ah*

*Laughter*

**Sheila** *You couldn't get teddy bears, so I had this fluffy dog that I'd take for walks. There were no teddy bears!*

**Margaret** *Sweet rationing went on right into the 1950's I think. When I was in High School - I'd be about fourteen or fifteen in 1952 or 53 - we had a school holiday in Switzerland. This was a big thing - going abroad for a holiday for the first time. We travelled across France by train overnight and got to Switzerland in the early hours of the morning. That's when I realised I was in a foreign country because on the station in Switzerland there were chocolate*

*machines which actually worked. We'd seen them on the stations in Britain but they weren't working. They were all empty and dirty. The Swiss people had not been involved in the War and their chocolate machines were all working. It was marvellous*

**What was your most unusual War time meal?**

**Nancy** *Pig's head, rabbit or animal hearts. You could get ox hearts which were big - anything to eke out the rations. We thought they were alright then, but I don't think I'd want to eat them now.*

**Sylvia** *Dried egg was possible.*

**Doris** *We used to have shark steaks or was it whale meat?*

**Nancy** *Perhaps whale meat. If my mother cooked it, I don't know how she prepared it.*

**Doris** *You could make brawn with a pig's head.*

**Sylvia** *That didn't really have anything to do with the War though. People used pigs' heads before the War.*

**Nancy** *I can remember that my grandfather used to eat chitterlings.*

**Chorus** *Oh yes, they were lovely.*

**What were they?**

**Doris** *The intestines of pigs.*

**Sylvia** *You can still buy chitterlings and tripe.*

**Doris** *You haven't lived, Carol.*

*Voices murmur in praise of tripe and onions.*

**Carol** *It sounds as though you mostly enjoyed the food you had during the War.*

**Sylvia** *I think we were just grateful to get it.*

**Chorus** *Yes.*

**Joan** *I remember if you wanted to use your one egg as a fried egg, you would fry some Spam as well because you couldn't get bacon then. The fried Spam would be very tasty.*

**What was your favourite and least favourite War time meal?**

**Margaret** *Anything with margarine was my least favourite.*

**Rita** *It wasn't like the margarine you can get now, Stork or Can't Tell It's Not Butter. The butter ration was about two ounces a week.*

**Doris** *Everything was about two ounces.*

*General murmur of assent.*



**Nancy** *I think my mother used to blend the margarine with butter to make it more palatable. Then there was an argument in the family about those who would rather have butter and a little bit of it - a scraping - or those who would prefer to have it all mixed up together so the margarine wouldn't be so bad.*

**Sylvia** *We used to eat a lot of potatoes during the War. There'd be big notices up saying, "Dig for Victory. Eat Potatoes." We were encouraged to make everything with potatoes. You could grow them easily.*

**Rita** *They were plentiful.*

**Sylvia** *We used to use potatoes instead of flour to make potato scones. They were quite nice really.*

**Rita** *The Government used to issue recipes, didn't they? They would publish them in the newspapers, telling you how to use the ingredients which were available.*

*Did rationing stay the same throughout the War? Or did it get tougher or easier?*

**Rita** *Food shortages were even worse after the War was over, weren't they?*

**Margaret** *Bread wasn't on ration was it, until after the War?*

**Rita** *No, that's right.*

*You said you had lots of potatoes. Did you also have crisps?*

**Chorus** *No.*

**Sylvia** *Not during the War.*

**Margaret** *Because of the fat needed for frying them, I suppose.*

**Doris** *I don't think crisps had been made then.*

**Joan** *I remember the salt in a twist of blue paper.*

*Voices debate the arrival of crisps*

**Sylvia** *No, we didn't have crisps before the War.*

**Margaret** *They must have been American.*

**What were sweets like in those days? Were they the same or different from now?**

**Voice** *Quite varied really.*

**Rita** *We had Sherbert Fountains and rolls of liquorice.*

**Nancy** *Acid drops and fruit drops. I always used to buy acid drops, but they made my tongue sore if I sucked too many.*

**Sylvia** *There was a shop in Queen Street just before the War. I don't know if it was still there during the War. In the window there was a machine which made*

*toffee whorls. You could see the toffee going round inside in thick strips. Then it would form into an S shape before dropping down. It was fascinating to watch.*

**Joan** *The shop was called 'Toffee Whorls.'*

**Margaret** *Sweets were all sold loose from jars, not in plastic packets like they are now. They were weighed out by hand.*

**Rita** *You could buy a pennyworth of sweets.*

**Sheila** *As you see them in St. Fagan's in the jars.*

**Joan** *I remember in my little corner shop they used to make their own monster bags for a ha'penny each. There were little bits of broken sweets and, if you were lucky, you might find a square of Cadbury's Milk Chocolate.*

**Doris** *I never found that.*

**Joan** *Oh, I did. The shop was on the corner of my street. They knew me, so I think they fished one out for me. I don't know whether it was a good thing because I'm a chocoholic now.*

**Sylvia** *Do you know what a ha'penny is?*

**Richard** *Is it three pence?*

**Sylvia** *No, it's half an old penny.*

**Nancy** *I could get a bag of sweets like that for a ha'penny. I used to go round the corner to a sweet shop. My father would give us a ha'penny each on a Tuesday and on a Thursday. We'd go round the corner and get a cone-shaped bag with at least six or seven sweets in it - all for a ha'penny. It's less than you could imagine these days.*

**Joan** *We used to have a farthing as well, which was half of a ha'penny.*

**Sylvia** *You could get two everlasting strips of toffee for a farthing, which was a quarter of a penny then and would be less than half a penny now. There were two hundred and forty pennies in a pound then, instead of one hundred. Two and a half old pennies were equivalent to one penny now.*

**Were you excited when you heard that Britain was at war or were you scared?**

**Sylvia** *Scared, I think.*

**Rita** *I was scared. I was away from home.*

*Voices murmur agreement.*

**Doris** *I was excited.*

**Margaret** *I don't know. I was a baby.*

**Nancy** *I was excited. I can remember that Sunday morning. We all thought there'd be an air raid straight away, but nothing happened. We thought things would*

*start immediately by Sunday dinnertime. I think a lot of us were excited because we weren't old enough to understand what it really meant and weren't too young to be frightened.*

**Doris** *No, that's true.*

**Joan** *The grown-ups had had a year of coming to grips with the fact that there was probably going to be a war. Mr. Chamberlain had managed to avert war for a year but it wasn't a settled peace. We were always waiting for something to happen. I think for older people, when it did, there was a sense of well, now we know where we are.*

**Rita** *I was on holiday with my brother on the East coast. On the first night after war was declared, the air raid sirens went. It was a false alarm, but we didn't know that. We were absolutely shaking, we were so scared. I had good reason to be scared because we were so near the East coast.*

### **How did the War affect school life?**

**Margaret** *It affected this school, of course, because it was bombed.*

### **Did any of you go to this school?**

**Margaret** *Yes.*

**Rita** *I was here before the War. When war broke out, I was in the High School.*

**Nancy** *So was I. Like Rita, I was here before the War. But the part of your school that was bombed was a big building for the older boys and girls - the Juniors. Fortunately, we weren't in it at that time.*

**Rita** *It was two storeys high, not like this one.*

**Margaret** *The Juniors didn't stop at eleven. It went up to school leaving age for those who didn't go on to the High School.*

**Nancy** *Those children stayed here until they were fourteen, so there were seven standards or year groups.*

**Doris** *Boys and girls weren't in the same class. There was a separate boys' school and a separate girls' school. They didn't mix.*

**Nancy** *The boys were upstairs and the young ladies were downstairs.*

**Rita** *They were mixed in the Infants but not in the Juniors.*

**Margaret** *Was it the same here as in Roath Park with separate playgrounds as well? In Roath Park boys and girls were divided off completely. The boys had a separate entrance and a separate playground.*

**Rita** *I don't think the children were separated here at playtime. There wasn't enough room, was there?*

**Nancy** *No. There was one playground, with a shelter down at the end.*

**Sylvia** *In the Secondary School, we used to talk to each other through the door. In Roath Park the playgrounds were separate but there was a little green door through which we could hear the boys because we were on one side and they were on the other. We used to knock on the door and the boys would talk to us through the door. Well, they were our friends!*

**Were you scared when the air raid sirens went off?**

**Chorus** *Oh yes..*

**Nancy** *It gave you a funny feeling.*

**What did you do when you heard the siren wailing?**

**Sylvia** *Doris and I became the quickest dressers that you'd ever find. We could take off our nighties and put on our clothes before the siren stopped. Then we'd be ready to go.*

**How long did the siren sound a warning for?**

**Voice** *A couple of minutes.*

**Sylvia** *Three minutes.*

**Doris** *The warning sound was a wailing noise.*

**Sylvia** *The 'All Clear' was a straight note.*

**Nancy** *Then you would hear the bombers coming over. If it was during the night, it was even more scary.*

**Sylvia** *We knew the different engine sounds of our planes and the German planes. They made a throbbing noise.*

**Joan** *We heard our own planes which were the fighters, whereas the German planes were the bombers. There was a difference between them.*

**Doris** *Like a drone. Then you'd hear the guns going bang, bang, bang.*

**Nowadays, do you have any animosity towards Germans?**

**Chorus** *No.*

**Rita** *Not really. It was too long ago. You can't look back all the time, can you?*

**Sylvia** *We don't have any animosity towards the Germans of today but I think we still have feelings about Hitler and the Gestapo*

**Did you have any friends at the time from Germany?**

**Chorus** *No.*

**Joan** *I knew a lady from Germany. She lived for a short time with my mother-in-law and she was appalled at what was going on there. She didn't like it one little bit. It was only the youngsters that Hitler seemed to have influenced through the Youth Training Programme. Ordinary people thought it was shocking.*

**Nancy**      *They were just the same sort of people as we were.*

*Is there anything anyone would like to share with us to conclude the session?*

**Margaret**    *At the end of the War, there were street parties and bonfires on the Rec. I can remember being in this school and our teacher asked us to write an essay about what we had done to celebrate V.E. night. Some children actually wrote that they'd lit a big bonfire and the fire engines had had to come to put it out. The teacher told the children off. I thought this was unfair because, after all, they were telling the truth.*

**Sylvia**        *The point was that the War ended here with Victory in Europe but British soldiers were still fighting.*

**Richard**      *They dropped the atomic bomb on Japan.*

**Sylvia**        *Then it was V.J. Day - Victory in Japan in August. That was the end of the war.*

**Doris**          *That was exciting really, wasn't it?*

**Carol**          *Thank you very much for everything you've shared with us and thank you to our interviewing team.*

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### **Members of Staff 1999**

#### **Back row ( left to right)**

Mr R Cooke (D/Head), Mrs J McGirr, Miss K Haskell, Mr R Ings, Mrs S Burt, Miss J Mahoney

#### **Front row**

Mrs A Mathewson, Mrs S Iona, Miss R Davies, Mr J Evans (Head), Mrs G Farrant, Mr J. Fitzpatrick,  
Miss K Pitman

#### **Staff not in picture**

Mrs L Moger, Mrs J Andrews, Mrs J Drake and Mrs S Kirby.

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This is a picture of the original key used  
To open Marlborough Road School on  
January 11<sup>th</sup> 1900



The inscription reads as follows :-

Presented to Dr W. T. Edwards J.P. on  
Opening Marlborough Road Board Schools  
Cardiff January 11<sup>th</sup> 1900

Messers Habershon Fawckner and Groves  
Architects  
David Davies Contractor.